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The Icelandic Canadian

Vol. 5

Winnipeg, Man., Summer 1947

No. 4

Salute to Our Readers

Barely a year ago we appealed to our subscribers to send us news from their localities, and other material that would be of general interest to our readers. The response has been most satisfactory, and we take pleasure in extending our gratitude and appreciation to the many who have sent in valuable contributions. Among these have been interesting news items, glimpses of pioneer days, articles on discovery and science, stories and verses.

As one of the aims of the Magazine is to foster and encourage literary talent it is gratifying to receive these voluntary efforts from various parts of the continent.

It is evident that many of our readers have a discriminating eye as regards news value, for at least three separate clippings and notes were sent in by enthusiastic Saskatchewan subscribers about Stewart Kolbeinson and his Organ.

Among other contributions recently received are: stories or verses by Caroline Gunnarson and Mrs. Asta Oddson, both of Winnipeg; Margaret I. Wandrey, Seattle, and Mrs. Nina Halperin, Los Angeles; a book review by J. Ragnar Johnson, Toronto; and news items from Judge G. Grimson, Rugby, N. D., and Nels G. Johnson, Bismarck, N. D., and F. Helgason, Edmonton, Alta. Mrs. Paul Halldorson, Bismarck, sent in the charming story, "They Shall Have Music," and Miss Marion Henderson, Iroquois Falls, Ont., submitted the thought-provoking item, "A Canadian Archaeological Treasure." Miss Henderson is not of Icelandic extraction; her interest is based on the facts that she has Icelandic

friends and that she is genuinely interested in cultural pursuits.

Kristvin Helgason of 1948 S. Spaulding St., Chicago, 23, has kindly offered to act as official representative for the Icelandic Canadian in his community. Mrs. Sigrun Lindal, although no longer on the staff, has continued to give valuable assistance to the News Editor.

Two people who, in the matter of contributions, have rendered great service to the Magazine, are: Mrs. B. F. Olgeirson, Mountain, N.D., and John Y. Bearnson, Utah. Mrs. Olgeirson has collected and sent us dozens of pictures of service personnel, and is also supplying literary material.

The Bearnsons (Mrs. Kate B. Carter, Mrs. Eleanor B. Jarvis of Spanish Fork, and especially John Y. Bearnson) have sent us books, pamphlets and clippings about the Icelandic pioneers in Utah. Because of their keen interest in their history and background they have shown a deep appreciation of the Icelandic Canadian Magazine and the book, Iceland's Thousand Years, and like so many others, they are willing to put forth every effort to further the effectiveness of our work. John Y. Bearnson is a successful business man in Springville, Utah, which appears to be an uncommonly progressive and culturally conscious community. A small city of only 6,500 to 7,000 people, it boasts among other things, an Art Gallery which has been described in an eastern publication as "the largest and in quality the best collection of art in a high school in the United States." This year during the Utah Centennial Celebrations, Springville held its 23rd annual Art

Exhibition. This annual exhibit "attracts from 200 to 250 paintings by state, national and internationally prominent artists."

The inclusion of many of these readers' contributions in our pages is furnishing a greater variety of reading material, and is also serving to relieve somewhat the pressure of work on some of our staff writers and others who have so generously done articles for the Magazine on assignment. It has, furthermore, created a spirit of co-operation and comradeship among the supporters of the Magazine who are so widely scattered all over this continent. Obviously all these people have offered their services as voluntary co-workers of the Magazine staff, because they feel conscious of the fact that the Icelandic Canadian is their magazine, produced by their generously proffered efforts combined with ours.

In addition to these contributions we receive every month from our readers scores of letters. Recently these have been too numerous for us to attempt to pick out individual remarks. The general consensus of comment is: "We read the Magazine from cover to cover and find it increasingly interesting."

This issue of the Magazine carries a new feature on "Hobbies."

All around us we have enough material in this field to grace many future issues of the Icelandic Canadian. But on this subject we would also like to hear from our readers. As our space is limited we will naturally feature in this new column achievements of people of Icelandic extraction, at least for the present. But we are also interested in outstanding "hobbies" of others who have, perhaps, enriched Icelandic communities with their work.

Have you a hobby? Do you know of some one who has an interesting or unique spare-time avocation that has served to enrich the individual himself or his community? Tell us about it.

Remember, dear Reader, that you have a share in this venture which was so hopefully launched five years ago and which is functioning ever more effectively because of your volunteer efforts. In view of the growing interest and support of our readers, we feel that the future of the Magazine is bright indeed!

—Holmfridur Danielson.

Capt. W. Kristjanson receives appointment

At a recent meeting of the Manitoba Historical and Scientific Society it was announced that Wilhelm Kristjanson has received a fellowship for the purpose of making a study of the Icelandic settlers in Manitoba and writing their history. He will take a leave from the Department of Education to work on the society's fellowship. The Historical Society is granted financial support from the Manitoba government for the purpose of pursuing this work. Mr. Kristjanson has specialized in history and studied

for a year at Oxford on an I.O.D.E. scholarship. The amount of the fellowship is \$2,000.

★

Harold Parker has been appointed a delegate to the World Conference of Christian Youth at Oslo, Norway, July 22—31. Harold is attending United College in preparation for the ministry. He is the son of Mrs. Anna Johannesson Parker and the late Mr. E. Parker of Winnipeg.

★

Laxdal Appointed to Normal School

Principal of Gimli school for the past 12 years, John K. Laxdal, has been appointed science master of the Manitoba Normal School, it was announced recently, by the Department of Education.

Historical Sketch of the Icelandic Settlement of Argyle

Delivered before the Icelandic Canadian Club, Monday, January 20, 1947.

By T. J. OLESON

At the outset of my remarks I may say that I have taken Argyle to mean not only the municipality of that name but also the Icelandic settlement in the municipality of South Cypress in which the village of Glenboro is located. Argyle then, as far as I am concerned, includes roughly the territory bounded on the east by the village of Cypress River, on the south by the village of Baldur, on the west by the boundary between the municipalities of Argyle and Strathcona, and on the north by the Assiniboine river which flows from 3 to 12 miles north of the village of Glenboro. The settlement from north to south would be about 20-25 miles from east to west some 10-15 miles.

The physical features of this tract vary somewhat in its different parts. The municipality of Argyle consists of open rolling prairie, marked by numerous small bodies of water and a range of hills (the Tiger Hills). These latter run from east to west across the southern part of the district and are considered by many a very attractive feature of the municipality. Some of them are of considerable height and the view from them in late summer when the wheat is taking on the colour of gold, or when the fields are dotted with stooks, is among the best to be had on the prairies. Standing on these hills and gazing over the settlement I have often felt that the countryside must have seemed akin to Paradise to the first Icelanders who came thither from the woods and bogs of New Iceland.

Proceeding north through the settlement towards Glenboro one comes upon a vast marsh stretching for miles and miles from east to west across the

northern part of Argyle municipality, about two miles south of Glenboro. The land here is flatter than in the southern part and remains so until one arrives about two miles north of Glenboro. Here begins a vast range of sandhills which extends northward almost to Carberry or a distance of some 20-25 miles. Here are some good farmlands, but not equal in fertility to those in most parts of Argyle municipality. However in the valley of the Assiniboine which winds through these sandhills are to be found some of the finest farmlands in the whole settlement, rich heavy soil which year after year returns a golden harvest. There is much timber here too. In my opinion the most scenic spots in the whole settlement are to be found here—an opinion conditioned probably by the fact that as a child I spent almost every Sunday back at the river, running up and down the spruce-clad hills, boating on the river, drinking the clear spring water, picking the abundant berries and partaking of Icelandic hospitality at its very best in the home of Tryggvi Ólafsson—a man of whom all spoke highly.

Such then is the district about whose settlement I am going to say a few things tonight.

As is well known, the first large body of Icelanders arrived in Manitoba in the fall of 1875 and proceeded to locate themselves at Gimli. The history of that settlement is well known but the courage and endurance of those pioneers can never be overemphasized. They passed through as great hardships as any of the countless pioneers who throughout the centuries have moved forward the frontier of the West-European Christian civilisation—for the

Icelandic pioneers are but the rearguard of that great army of settlers who since 800 have been the instruments through which the West-European civilisation expanded from south-western Europe first east and then west to the rich lands of America. The life of pioneers is always much the same. The following passage might have been written at almost any time—it was written in the 14th century:

"For they (the settlers) had left the sweet soil of their native country and entered into an alien land, in which their future was to be, where for many years they were destined to endure hardships without hope of return to their homes, even unto the fourth or sixth generation of them. They came from a fertile homeland, peaceful and quiet, and penetrated a country of horror and vast solitude and filled with baneful war. In a word, putting behind their backs an abundance of everything in this world—liberty, home honour—they accepted hunger and thirst, faced the forest and the wolf and the barbarian, endured infinite poverty and privation, endless discomfort, failure and peril."

The Icelanders fittingly and deservedly take their place among these English, Scots, Irish, French, German, Spanish and other pioneers as the architects of the great edifice of West-European civilisation—a civilisation marked as no other by a desire for expansion even to infinity—and indeed someone has remarked that no poetry ever composed by man expresses as clearly the adamantine will to break through all bounds as does the old Eddic poetry of the Nordic peoples.

The Icelandic pioneers who settled in New Iceland found there a hard country and were beset by every hardship from deadly disease to devastating floods. It was an inhospitable region, although they have by today rendered it anything else. But the first years were hard and one can easily understand that when more attractive regions were open

to them they took up their packs once more and moved to districts where it seemed that they and especially their children might find a brighter future. It is not necessary for me to dwell on the reasons that prompted the exodus from New Iceland, but it is here that the history of the settlement of Argyle begins.

Many of the New Icelanders found their future in North Dakota. Others were loath to leave Canada for one reason or another—gratitude for the treatment they had received at the hands of the Canadian government, the desire to remain beneath the Union Jack and what it stood for in their minds, the availability of good lands elsewhere in Manitoba (the Mennonites, who had arrived in 1874, had already shown that the open treeless prairie was as fine a home for men as any), and other considerations explain this.

The year 1880 was a year of very bad floods in New Iceland. This seems to have been the immediate cause of the emigration to Argyle. After much discussion of the necessity of finding new homes, two of the New Icelanders, Sigurður Christopherson and Kristján Jónsson, left the district to explore the possibilities of southern Manitoba. An Englishman, Everett Parsonage, who had lived in New Iceland before moving to the vicinity of Pilot Mound, sent back favourable reports of conditions there. To his home the two explorers intended to go. They made their way by rowboat and steamer to Emerson and Nelsonville, and from there made their way on foot for three days, sleeping in the open at night, until they reached the home of Parsonage at Pilot Mound. Accompanied by him they set out in a northwesterly direction and came to the present Argyle district—a region then unsettled except for two men, an Englishman, A. A. Esplin, and a Welshman, G. J. Parry, who had taken lands there and were living in tents. The latter of these two men was from this time on

one of the principal landmarks of the Bru part of the Argyle settlement and a very good friend of the Icelanders. He died a few years ago at the ripe old age of 95, respected by everyone in the district.

Sigurður and Kristján looked the district over and it seemed very good in their eyes. They selected land for themselves and some of their friends, then returned on foot to Nelsonville, where there was a land registry office. Here Sigurður Christopherson, the father of the Argyle settlement, filed claim to his land and became the first Iclander to own land in the district. Kristján did not file a claim at this time, going back to New Iceland by way of North Dakota.

Sigurður now walked back to Argyle, bearing a scythe, and in company with Parry and Esplin proceeded to do some haying. He also helped the two to build the first log cabin in the settlement.

On the heels of Sigurður and Kristján two other inhabitants of New Iceland came—Skafti Arason and William Taylor, brother of the John Taylor who had come with the Icelanders to New Iceland as the representative of the government of Canada and who remained throughout a very staunch friend of the Icelanders, almost becoming one himself. Skafti and his companion selected lands and then walked all the way to the mouth of the Souris river—about 25 miles, no great distance, I suppose, in the eyes of men who walked back and forth across Manitoba—where there was a land office at which they filed their claims. They then began the trek back, going by way of Pilot Mound, where at the home of Everett Parsonage they met Halldór Arnason and Friðbjörn S. Friðriksson who had just arrived there with thirty head of cattle which they had driven from New Iceland for John Taylor. Parsonage was going to feed the cattle throughout the winter, as fodder was scarce in New Iceland. These two persuaded Skafti to return to Argyle with them. Here they in turn took lands

and walked to the Souris river to register them. They also selected lands for some of their friends. Having done these things the three returned to New Iceland by way of Portage La Prairie and Winnipeg. These expeditions in the year 1880, made on foot, the men sleeping in the open and sometimes undergoing hunger, were the beginnings of the Argyle settlement.

The actual occupation of the lands began the next year, 1881. New Iceland was left behind on the Ides of March by the first party, which consisted of Sigurður Christopherson (who left his wife and two children behind), Guðmundur Normann (who also left his family behind), Skúli Arnason with wife and three children, Skafti Arason with wife and two children and Björn Jónsson with wife and five children. The journey was not an easy one. The possessions of the settlers were hauled on sleighs drawn by oxen. The cattle were driven on foot. The journey to Winnipeg took more than two days. Here Björn remained behind for a time but the others left the next day and reached their lands on March 31, having travelled close to 200 miles often in the worst weather. The only shelter the company had were two rough houses, about 10 ft. by 6 ft., built on the sleighs and heated by stoves. The weather for the first two weeks after the arrival in the settlement was very inclement, but after that time the settlers were able to begin making themselves at home on their lands. Later in the summer the following settlers came to swell the ranks: Þorsteinn Jónsson, known as "á Hólmi", one of the outstanding men of the district, Björn Jósefsson and Halldór Arnason. Thus by the winter of 1881-82 there were six Icelandic homes in the district—in the western part those of Skafti Arason, Sigurður Christopherson and Björn Jósefsson, and in the eastern part those of Þorsteinn Jónsson, Guðmundur Normann and that of the two brothers, Halldór and Skúli Arnason. William

Taylor had also settled in Argyle this year.

In the next three or four years settlers streamed into the district to the number of more than fifty. It is impossible to mention individuals but it may be said that in the main Argyle was settled by people from the north of Iceland. According to Björn Jónsson, of 60 settlers 39 came from Þingeyjarsýsla originally, 11 from the two Múlasýslur (I suppose it would be correct to regard them as the salt which flavoured the company), 4 from Eyjafjarðarsýsla, 4 from Skagafjarðarsýsla and 2 from elsewhere. In other words 47 came from the northern part of Iceland. Many interesting conclusions might no doubt be gleaned from these figures.

Björn Jónsson, on whose article on the origin of the Argyle settlement, I have drawn freely in the foregoing account, described the settlers and the early days as follows:

"All these immigrants were poor men, some possessing nothing. Skafti Árasor and Sigurður Christopherson will have been the most well to do. Skafti possessed twelve cattle, three of which were work oxen. Sigurður had somewhat fewer cattle and this was their whole wealth. It may however be mentioned that Skafti had \$3.00 and with \$2.50 of this bought fifty pounds of wheat flour during the summer when he settled on his land. About Sigurður it may be said that when he fetched his wife and children he walked all the way to Winnipeg, for, although there was a railway between Winnipeg and Portage La Prairie at that time, he had no money for his fare. However, in spite of the poverty of the settlers, there was no real lack of necessities. Hay and pastures were excellent, and the cattle therefore gave good returns, and people very soon acquired swine and chickens to their great advantage. All built log cabins and assisted one another at this task; these had no floor at first and a roof of sod, for lumber was unobtainable.

All began to plow their lands the first year and received good crops from these patches the second year. During the first years all the wheat was cut with reapers, which a few men owned, and tied by hand, but some acquired hay mowers at once and cut for their neighbours also. Oxen were used for all work; in the first years no one owned horses and hardly a farmer had a wagon. An odd man brought with him a Red River cart, and others built wooden wagons and used them during the first years..."

Life was not easy for the pioneers during the first years, although the Argyle settlers never knew there the hardships they and others endured in New Iceland. One difficulty they had to contend with was the great distance to the nearest markets. Most of the grain the farmers had to sell had to be taken to Manitou or Brandon, some 60 miles. The journey took from three to four days and men usually travelled in companies. But in 1886 the railway came to Glenboro and this town and Cypress River grew up. This made a great difference and from then on the prosperity of the Argylers increased. Within twenty years the settlement had become very prosperous and agriculture was carried on in the modern manner. Many of the settlers erected fine buildings on their farms. The barn which Skafti Árason built at the beginning of the century, and which is still standing and in use, was an outstanding example of these. It was a sort of seven-day wonder. Its dimensions were huge, 100' x 60'. It had a stone foundation, 10' high, with a superstructure of timber rising to the giddy height of 42'. From its roof a windmill reached skyward and water was piped to every stall in the building. It is a tribute to the farming ability of its owner, who was one of the finest farmers in the district, establishing a reputation which his descendants have worthily maintained. He is but an outstanding example

(Continued on page 40)

Hobnobbing With Hobbies

By Holmfridur Danielson

The urge for expression is strong in most individuals. But unfortunately real creative ability does not always go hand-in-hand with this urge. To the discriminating observer this is often very evident in the work of the so-called professionals in their various fields of endeavor. Often high-pressure publicity agents are hired to force upon an all too gullible public products in the field of literature and art that are inferior and even harmful. Even the sacred fortresses of our finer arts are endangered by an invading era of commercialism whose mills grind fast and furiously and for one purpose only—that of monetary gain.

It is therefore refreshing to find that, in this age of speed and sensationalism, there are people in all walks of life who, purely for the joy of it, devote their all-too-few spare moments to some artistic hobby.

Their efforts may not receive public recognition or be featured in fat headlines, and decidedly they are not indulged in for material gain. Indeed, many of these hobbies demand a considerable outlay of money. But in many instances the worker's patience and skill results in work of fine craftsmanship and artistry, and his reward lies in his joy of fulfillment. Thus he succeeds in enriching his own life and that of his community.

Beginning with the following columns the Icelandic Canadian will from time to time give its readers glimpses of some of these interesting hobbies.

She Sews a Fine Seam

An exhibition of handicraft in Winnipeg would seem incomplete without some sample of the work of Mrs. Finnur Johnson. Indeed, one of the most attractive figures at many of these affairs

has been Mrs. Johnson herself, dressed in her festive Icelandic costume, her cloud of white hair softly waved against the elegant high head-dress, and framing her still youthful face.



In her home one finds further evidence of her patient and artistic work: luncheon cloths in hardanger, satin stitch or applique; doilies, runners and a wide assortment of linens, old and new, in various types of embroidery.

Floor mats and chair seats (her utility pieces, she calls them) hooked from rags, lend a splash of color even to the kitchen. A place of honor in the living room is reserved for a deep blue upholstered easy chair, the seat and back of which are done in richly-toned needlepoint. A decorative design in cross-stitch goes marching in conventional order along the border of the ecru monk's cloth couch cover, and chair sets. On one wall is a panel in gobelin stitch, bearing the unmistakable signs of old country work.

Flanking the desk are two framed pictures done on ivory linen. In one of these we see a few tassels of golden wheat done in silken thread of just exactly the right "straw-gold" color, the stitches so fine and close as to be almost invisible. The other one depicts a small flock of summer birds, whose delicate or brilliant colors are blended with the most meticulous care. How pleasant for Mrs. Johnson when she sits at her desk on a grey winter afternoon, to bask in the summer atmosphere she has created with her own deft hands.

Last fall, owing to illness, Mrs. Johnson lost almost completely the use of her right arm. But she did not give up her beloved needlework. She carefully exercised her fingers until she was able to work at her hardanger and other pieces by inserting the needle with her right hand and pulling it through with her left hand, lacking the strength to do so with her right. Just to prove to herself that her skilful fingers would still respond to her creative instinct, she started to fashion the exquisite miniature Icelandic costume pictured here. The cut and workmanship on the costume is correct down to the last delicate stitchery of gilt metallic "baldýring" on the bodice, and wide colored border on the skirt, which is done in Danish technique known as "kunst-broderi". — In place of the traditional silver or silver-gilt filigree belt, Mrs. Johnson used a necklace made of flat gold

leaves. Over the padded satin foundation of the head-dress is draped a lace veil which originally graced a real Icelandic "skautbúningur," and held in place by a part of an identical necklace.

A daughter of Asgeir Finnbogason and his wife Ragnhildur Ólafsdóttir who lived at Lundum in Mýrasýsla, Iceland, Guðrún Johnson has lived in Winnipeg for fifty-four years. Far from spending her life sitting around completely engrossed in her handwork, Mrs. Johnson has been one of the most active workers in the Icelandic community here. She was for seven years president of the Ladies' Aid of the First Lutheran church, and for twelve years president of the Lutheran Women's League, which she was largely instrumental in organizing in 1925. Since that organization established its own annual publication, called "Ardís," Mrs. Johnson has been its business manager.

Mrs. Johnson and her husband Finnur, who was at one time editor of the Icelandic weekly, "Lögberg", celebrated their golden wedding three years ago. Their children are: Mrs. J. P. Duncan, Sinclair, Man., and J. Ragnar Johnson, practicing law in Toronto, Ont. Another son, Asgeir, lost his life in the First World War. Mrs. Johnson is still active in community work.

Statues in Snow

Like dancing rays of Aurora Borealis, the string of colored lights, swinging in the wind, cast a glow over the gleaming snow figures of Santa Claus and his reindeer. To the children and adults who stood around excitedly and gazed at the snow figures, the scene looked like a veritable fairyland. But the exclamations of admiration went unheard by the artist, for Kristin Johnson was in the house thawing out her frozen fingers.

For two years in succession she had won second prize for her snow sculpture in the contest sponsored by the Winni-

peg Free Press. In 1937 for her model of the "Taj Mahal," the famous tomb at Agra, built by the Mogul Emperor Shah Jehan, as a memorial to his wife; and the following year her impressive figure



of a Viking in full armour tied for second place with a fine piece of work done by Mabel (Bristow) Vezy, another Gimli girl of Icelandic lineage.

Kristin was born in Winnipeg, but soon after that her parents, Ketill Valgarðsson and Soffia (Sveinbjörnsdóttir)

moved to Gimli, Man. From her childhood on Kristin had a great longing for artistic achievement. When in her teens she had the opportunity to study for a year at St. Mary's Academy, and there she did several oil paintings.

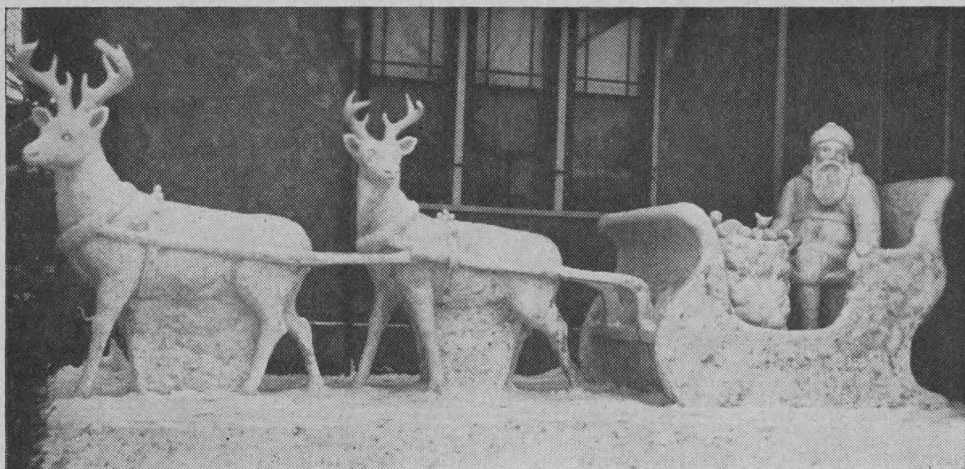
After she was married in 1914 to Guðmundur Johnson, she spent many a long winter evening, while her husband was at work, doing elaborate crotchet, tatting, hardanger and other embroidery.

Then the Johnsons moved to Winnipeg, and now Kristin could really indulge her love for the beautiful. It appears that during the last twenty-five years she has taken advantage of almost every type of short course in the arts and crafts that this city has afforded. She has made painted cushions, scarfs, and handkerchiefs, elaborate lamp shades, and landscapes in pastels.

For a part of three winters she attended a course in Sculpture being held in Winnipeg. With her usual intense energy she applied herself wholeheartedly to the work, with the result that she has in her home, in addition to some practice pieces, seven really good figures in plaster. Among them are the formidable statue of the "muscle-man," a definite "must" for every student, and three life-size heads, two of them finished in bronze. She has done remarkable likenesses of some of her contemporaries.

But Kristin's is a high-strung, seeking spirit. She is not content to savor the joys afforded through one channel of expression. In her girlhood she had puttered around with photography, learning some technical points from a neighbor, who had considerable knowledge in this art. Now she is a full-fledged camera fan, and an enthusiastic member of the Manitoba Camera Club. In her basement darkroom, she has the most complete photographic equipment. To the uninitiated this looks like a fascinating yet bewildering array of cabinets, bottles, tubes, frames, lenses, enlargers, washing-trays, and what-nots.

For the past five years Kristin has



been music librarian for the First Lutheran church. This entails looking after the hundreds of copies of anthems and secular music used by two large choirs, cataloguing them, sorting and putting them away after use, and mending and replacing copies. In addition she has copied by hand and mimeographed thirty-eight musical numbers for the choirs.

During the last three winters Kristin has made over thirty elaborate costumes for the Christmas Pageants held in the church. Just as added insurance against idleness and ennui, Stina, as she is called by her friends, in her "spare time" works in the lovely garden surrounding her home at 109 Garfield St.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson have one daughter, Eileen, at home.

That Lovely Thing That Died

You must follow me as I lead you on your way,
The birds will sing matins, the sun shine all day.
You must follow me though the shadows cross your path.
From one may be taken the little that he hath.

I must be a signal that Faith may still abide,
To one may be given the lovely thing that died.
I must be a signal that sorrows come and go,
To-day may be tragic, to-morrow the love lights glow.

You must follow me though the shadows cross your path,
From one may be taken the little that he hath.
I must be a signal that Faith may still abide,
To you may be given that lovely thing that died.

—Winnipeg, Can.

ASTA ODDSON

Homestead Experience

By J. A. VOPNI

(Ed. note: Jacob Agúst Vopni was until his retirement one of the most progressive farmers of the Swan River district, and has many times won the highest prizes for his pure-bred cattle).

When I was twenty-five years of age I borrowed money for a ticket from my native country, Iceland, for myself, my wife and three children to Canada.

We landed in Winnipeg on the 3rd day of September, 1892. The following morning I packed up again and took the train for Glenboro, Man., where I joined up with one of the rough and ready gangs of harvest hands. It is quite difficult for a man who is not used to the work here and does not know the English language to get started. Later I found that I had learned a good deal of slang and bad language before I realized its meaning. This should be borne in mind by men who work with foreigners who have just come to this country.

Later I moved about ten miles south, to Baldur, where I experienced some really hard labor and low wages. Most of this time or until 1898 I worked for Creamers Brothers. In these six years I had acquired three things: a little hold of the language; a few head of cattle; and last but not least, my family had increased to five children.

In the years 1897 and '98 I read about the government's surveying a new district for homesteads—a district by the name of Swan River Valley, somewhere up in the wilderness north-west of Dauphin and the Duck Mountains, and so to speak, beyond civilization.

Mr. S. Christophersson, who in the years 1875 and '76 assisted the first Icelanders in the colonization at Gimli, was an immigration agent for the government at the time, and was going out to Swan River district in the spring to look over the land and advise the people according to his best judgment.

I asked him if he found the land suitable, to file a claim on a homestead for me. On his arrival back I learned that he had entered my claim to the S.W. quarter of 32-35-28 W. of the first meridian.

So now I would try my luck at homesteading! Once more we packed our meagre belongings and set out with sturdy courage on this new adventure.

As I owned a couple of steers partly broken, I bought an old wagon for \$15, secured some of the steel tires solid with barbed wire, and loaded our family and bedding into it. (Our furniture took up no room!) Two eager land-seekers agreed to drive the cattle for me and my few sheep. On June 15th, 1898, we started the journey with about 300 miles of bad roads ahead of us.

We got safely to Dauphin and rested there for two days before making a fresh start over the Duck mountains on a trail that had been blazed by the government the winter before. The distance from Dauphin to Swan River is about a hundred miles and we got over it in seven days. Sometimes we had difficulty in getting water along the way. At those times we relied on the cows which never went dry. The only change in diet on the trip over the mountains was from oatmeal porridge and milk to milk and oatmeal porridge!

One day in a very high wind we were travelling through tall timber which kept falling down all around us. We had to cut away the trees that fell across the trail and our progress was slow. That night we travelled very late, trying to find an open space for camping, but had to make our lodging among the tall timber, after all.

Sleep did not come to us at first. It was weird and fearsome lying there in the darkness, hearing the wind raging and tearing at the tree tops, and listening with bated breath for that most ominous sound of all—that grinding roar as a mighty monarch of the forest would crash thunderously through the surrounding trees and hit the ground with a quivering thud, which sent a shiver through the frail humans who waited prayerfully for the dawn.

When we awoke the next morning it was calm and we were all safe. There must have been some guiding hand over us stronger than the wind.

When we at last reached the valley we came to a little village of tents. The Government had already established a Land Office in a tent with the late Hugh Harley as land agent. He walked out some distance to meet us and with a broad smile on his face bade us welcome to the valley. He told me where I could buy some bread and butter at the tents. On my way back to the wagon my four-year-old boy jumped up, shouting out, "Mamma, mamma, Papa has some bread and butter." We rested at the tent town over Sunday.

The late P. McKay, who, to meet the needs of the small community, had just started a store in a little log shack, got his goods from Dauphin, hauled by oxen over the mountains. This of course made them expensive. There was a big rise in the price of flour that spring on account of the Spanish war. It rose to the unusual high of \$5.00 per hundred pounds.

I learned at the Land Office that my homestead was twenty miles west in the Valley, and we started off on Monday morning. It took two days to reach the homestead, building my own bridges over creeks as I went. I got there on July 15th, after a month's travelling. The farm is situated on the bank of the Swan River. We found here lots of bush and scrub, rich soil and an abundance of many kinds of wild fruit. Our near-

est neighbor was six miles away and the next one twenty miles distant. I had \$10.00 in cash and these few head of cattle and sheep, which we could not see for scrub if they were a few rods away. The mosquitoes were bad, so by keeping up a good smudge night and day we could keep the animals around.

The first thing to do was to put up a log cabin. This was nearly done and a sod roof had been put on one side only, when the Rev. Mr Johnson came to visit us. And while he was with us there was a thunderstorm! We all had to take shelter under the side of the cabin with the sods on, and thought we were lucky to have even that.

That summer was a busy one, and what was left of it went very quickly. Arriving too late to put in a garden, the main work consisted of making hay for the stock, hunting through the bush for the animals, and putting up some more buildings for the winter. By the time the first shack was up provisions were getting low and I decided we should have some mutton. My wife told me there was no salt and as we could not keep the meat without salt, I hitched up the oxen and drove twenty miles into the tent town to buy fifty cents' worth of that necessary commodity. With this small precious parcel I arrived home after a two days' trip to discover that the sheep were all lost in the bush, so we had the salt and no mutton. Three of the sheep turned up again in November, which gave me a chance to start a new flock. I suppose the coyote got the rest of them.

There were travellers coming and going that summer to locate homesteads. At that time only a part of the Valley was open for homesteading although most of it had been surveyed. Three men came to me and asked me to break one acre on each of their three quarters, which they had picked out on townships south of my place. Breaking a piece of the land would give them a squatter's right. I was to get \$4.00 an

acre for scrubbing and breaking. I was glad of this unexpected chance to earn some money, and with an old plow loaded on my wagon, I started off through the heavily wooded scrub country, which bore no trace of a trail excepting the one I made as I went. I located the land by the survey stakes and started to work. Looking for water, I found an old pot-hole with stagnant water, so I dug a hole alongside of it, where the water soon soaked in. Because the days were hot, I drank it but the oxen did not like it. I broke the three acres, one on each quarter, drove a stake at the end of each breaking, hewed a flat side on each stake, and wrote the owner's name on it. I got back after three days. I have seen none of these men since that time, but one of them was thoughtful enough to send me the four dollars which I felt I had really earned.

On the second of October that fall there was a snow storm which continued all day and part of the following day. On the third morning the snow was so deep there was no pasture for the cattle and I went out with a fork to throw out some hay from the coils to feed them. A few days later the snow was all taken off by a rain. There was not enough drying weather that fall to cure the hay. By this time I had put up enough hay in a stack for my stock, but I had intended to make much more hay than I needed for my own use so as to have it to sell to homesteaders who were by now moving in fast.

Early in November I built a shack to move into for the winter, chinking between the logs with moss to make it warm. The top and the bottom, of course, were from Mother Earth, as there was no lumber available. One family that had taken a homestead in the same section as ours, asked me if they could move in with us. There were seven in my family and six in theirs augmented by a new arrival in January, so that just made fourteen people

in a cabin 14 x 14. Although it was somewhat crowded we got along fine, and all kept healthy and happy. We men were working outside all day, the wives made the beds in the morning and the children played in them during the day. To save room the cooking for both families was done on one stove, and everything went very smoothly.

So many homesteaders were moving in that fall that there was quite a demand for hay. A farmer moving in from southern Manitoba with some stock bought from me a big meadow of coils for six sacks of flour and I consider that one of the best deals I ever made.

A friend of mine from Dauphin who was up in my neighborhood for a week or so that summer to put up a shack and make some hay on his homestead, came back in December and brought me a bag of potatoes. They were frozen, of course, but believe me they tasted good to us. Early in April my tenant and I had finished a log cabin for him and he moved into it. But the question had arisen—how were we going to roof it? No sods to be had in mid-winter, so we piled a load of hay onto the rafters and got some loose dry clay along the river bank and tramped it into the hay. This roof kept out the water wonderfully well during the following summer.

In the spring of 1899 I made a boat and transported travellers across the river. Many of them came to me for information, as I could give them an idea where to find the land they were looking for. One man from Brandon came here on his way back from land hunting. After I had taken him across the river, he asked me about the road, and I told him I did not know how he could cross the creek a half-mile away as the water was very high. I had built a bridge over it the previous summer but felt sure the flood had taken it off. The traveller said he would give me twenty-five cents if I would get him across. Very well, I was game to try.

When we came to the creek we found the bridge was gone but the stringers were left, and buried in the ground. These were Balm of Gilead logs with very rough bark, so I decided to carry him across on one of those stringers. I shouldered him and started off. The stringers were about two feet under water, and alas, the bark was all gone off, leaving them slippery as glass. I swayed wildly to and fro, endeavouring to hold my balance and, finally dumping my burden head first into the creek, made a dive for the other bank. After he had wrung out his clothes and put them on again, he struck the trail, looking none the worse.

That summer I did a little breaking. The oxen could not stand working in the extreme heat of the day, so I got up between two and three o'clock in the morning and worked till nine, then turned the oxen out, went home, had my breakfast and did the milking. I went out again to clear scrub until noon, lay down for a couple of hours' rest, then hitched up the oxen again for the rest of the day.

Before I bought horses I cut 75 acres of wheat on my farm with the oxen, and although they are slow I think that is the safest way for a newcomer to start.

In the early days I made good use of the native food available, such as fish from the river and ducks and other

game which I could get with a gun. We used the hops from the bush for making yeast, and I made my own shoes from the hides of animals which I butchered. After the first year we always had a good garden, but for a few years the early frost used to catch our late crops, as is usual in most new districts.

The railroad came to Swan River in the fall of 1899, and this brought new life to the settlers and made things much easier. Much credit is due to my wife for putting up with all the inconveniences of early homesteading. In spite of the lack of many necessities, she managed to create a real home where love and care were never lacking. And she was perhaps kept busier than most housewives as we were blessed with three pairs of twins in our family.

As soon as I had the homestead duties done I had to mortgage the farm to get some implements with which to work the land. The rate of interest on the mortgage was 8%. Later I had to renew it at 8½%. The deed of ownership has been in my possession for many years now, and I have added five quarter sections to my holdings, besides the original homestead. In 1928 I threshed off 450 acres, which produced 18,000 bushels of grain.

The secret of successful homesteading may be written in a few words: "God helps those who help themselves."

The Icelandic Canadian

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Mrs. Kate B. Carter

A descendant of one of the Icelandic pioneers of Utah has distinguished herself in the field of literature and is today regarded as one of the most outstanding citizens of that State.

She is Mrs. Kate B. Carter, daughter of Finnbogi Bjornson and his wife Maria Christene Jensen, who came to Utah in



MRS. KATE B. CARTER

1866 from Jutland, Denmark. Finnbogi came to Utah in 1883 and was a nephew of Vigdis Bjornsdóttir (Holt) who arrived with the first settlers in 1857.

Mrs. Carter has compiled seven volumes dealing with the pioneer history of Utah. The work has been published by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, a powerful state-wide organization whose objects are "to perpetuate the names and achievements of the men and women who were pioneers in founding this commonwealth; by preserving old

landmarks, collecting relics, establishing a library of pioneer historical matter, securing unprinted manuscripts, photographs, and all such data as shall aid in perfecting a record of the strong character, pure life and heroic deeds of the pioneers . . ."

In all this labor of love being done by the DUP, Mrs. Carter has been an outstanding worker. She has been president of the organization five times and at this writing she is their president. The latest tremendous project being sponsored by the DUP and especially championed by Mrs. Carter is a spacious building on the State Capitol grounds to house the organization and its valuable collection of relics, and its extensive library of records, manuscripts, photographs and all other material pertaining to Utah pioneer history. The building when finished will cost around \$300,000.

One of the main objectives of the DUP is the preserving of landmarks. To this end they have erected in Utah, in the form of buildings, monuments or cairns, close to ninety markers, some of them of exquisite beauty and significance. The marker to commemorate the first settlement of Icelanders in America is No. 35. It was erected in 1938 in Spanish Fork and dedicated that year on August 1, the Icelandic National Holiday. Thousands of people attended the ceremonies at which Mrs. Cora Clegg, Captain of the Mt. Flonette Chapter (DUP), presided. Among those who spoke were J. Victor Leifson, chairman of the memorial committee, and Mrs. Eleanore B. Jarvis, who, in the absence of her sister Mrs. Kate B. Carter, gave some excerpts from Mrs. Carter's story about the Icelandic pioneers. A young ladies' choir in Icelandic costume sang, and Miss Ellen Jameson (daughter of Mrs. Ingibjorg M. Jameson, now in South Gate, Calif.) sang solos. Two

descendants of the earliest pioneers, Mrs. Ruby Didriksson and Miss Della Bjarnason, unveiled the monument. Addresses were given by Prof. Loftur Bjarnason and Joseph E. Nelson, a lawyer (son of Helga Einarsdóttir) and John K. Johnson. One survivor of the group of original settlers was there to receive a corsage of roses and the homage of the assembly. She was Mrs. Mary Hanson Sherwood, almost eighty years old, being born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1859, while her parents, Benedikt Hansson and Ragnhildur Stefansdottir, were on the long trek to Utah. During the journey and soon after Mary's birth, her father died and her mother was forced to carry on alone. The young child, Mary, is usually counted as the 16th in this small group of first pioneers, although the names of the adults only are engraved on the monument.

The Icelandic marker is in the form of a twenty-foot tall pale grey shaft, representing a lighthouse to symbolize the seafaring background of the Icelanders. The bronze plaque which is 16 x 28 inches bears this inscription:

"Leif Ericksson, an Icelander, discovered America in the year 1000 A.D. Eight centuries later, between 1855 and 1860 A.D., fifteen pioneers from Iceland established in Spanish Fork, the first permanent Icelandic settlement in the United States. They were:

Samuel Bjarnason and wife, Margret; Thordur Didriksson and wife, Gudrun; Gudmundur Gudmundsson; Loftur Jonsson and wife, Gudrun; Jon Jonsson and wife, Anna; Gudrun Jonsdottir; Magnus Bjarnason and wife, Thuridur; Vigdis Bjarnadottir (Holt); Gudny Erasmusdottir; Ragnhildur (Hanson).

"Erected by 'Mt. Flonette Camp' and 'The Icelandic Association'."

Like many outstanding achievements, Mrs. Carter's writing of this series, "Heart Throbs of the West," had a small and humble beginning. Some years ago she started preparing pamphlets on the Utah Pioneers for the study groups of

the DUP members. This aroused such interest that some members launched into exhaustive research in this field and the series which now numbers seven books evolved from the little paper folders.

Mrs. Carter's work has been widely acclaimed by press and public. This tribute was published by one of the leading Utah papers when her fourth book appeared:



"If the name of Mrs. Kate B. Carter, president of the state central company, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, is not now known throughout the nation as that of a most remarkable woman it is due to reach that eminence. . . . By some magic Mrs. Carter has avoided the dryness invariably associated with meticulous compilations. . . . The first three volumes are crammed with thrilling tales of every possible division of life in the pioneers' earliest days."

Mrs. Carter has traveled widely as a lecturer through the intermountain West and also in the East. Three times

she has given talks on Western History at the University of Nevada. She is at present on a lecture tour which will take her to Chicago, Cleveland and Philadelphia, to address organizations of her own group, "Daughters of Utah Pioneers." In July she will speak at the Western Folklore Society Conference, to be held at the University of Denver, Colorado. Being a homemaker with a household to run, Mrs. Carter is unable to accept all the many invitations to

give lectures in various parts of the country.

This year Utah is celebrating its Centennial. During the magnificent ceremonies to commemorate this event held at the Capitol, the lovely Centennial Queen, Miss Calleen Robinson, was presented to Governor Herbert B. Maw by Mrs. Kate B. Carter, president of the DUP.

Mrs. Carter is at present working on her eighth book. —H.D.

Long Weary Years We Fought

By E. J. THORLAKSON

Long, weary years we fought
And suffered in the tempest and the rain.
Nor thought
Through all the anguish and the pain
That all our fight were vain,
And all our dreams were naught.

We knew the die was cast,
And staked our life and fortune on the throw—
The blast
Of bursting shrapnel, and the flow
Of warm, red blood aglow—
And we returned at last.

Battered and broken men
Weary of war and all its fiendish lies.
Again
We breathed beneath our native skies
And thought to have the prize
We strove so long to win.

We hoped to find supreme,
A perfect love, a peace inviolate,
The gleam
That glimmered, pure—immaculate—
Upon that field of hate—
Oh, was it but a dream?

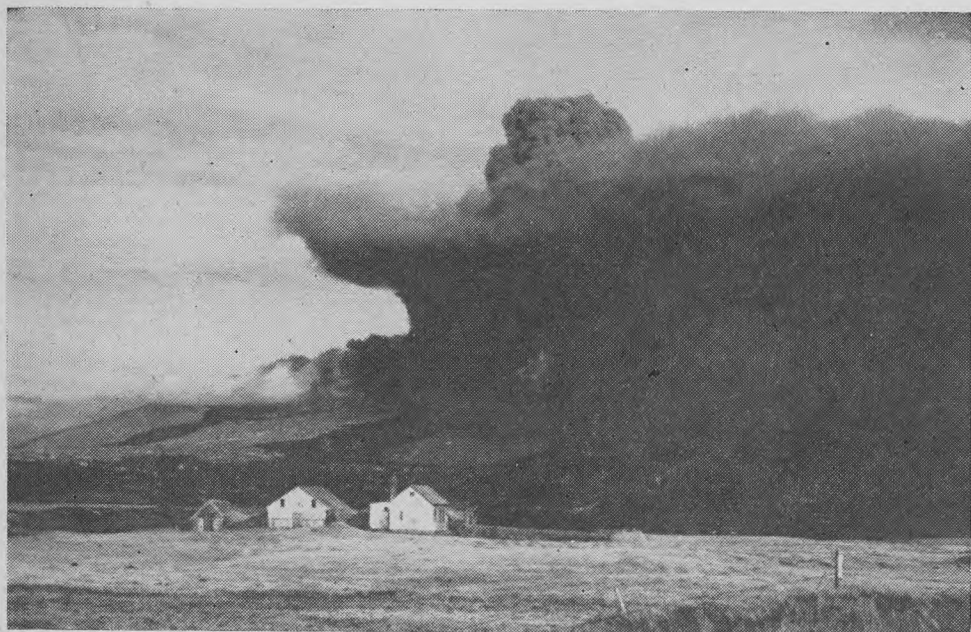
Hekla Erupts

By AXEL VOPNFJORD

An event of world-wide interest occurred in the storied land of mountains, volcanoes, waterfalls and geysers during the morning of Saturday, March 29. Hekla, the queen of Iceland's volcanoes, began to erupt! If historical records are reliable, this is the twenty-third time since the country was settled that human

people that for a thousand years have inhabited the bleak but picturesque regions of this remote, northern isle.

Time and again the super-heated, molten lava from the bowels of the earth has engulfed farmsteads in the vicinity of the mountain, and poison-laden volcanic ashes, spread over the land to a



Hekla in eruption, 1947. The dark streaks are the new molten lava.

eyes have witnessed this awe-inspiring spectacle.

Iceland's history throughout the centuries has been a noble example of man's courageous struggle against an unfavorable environment. Isolation, foreign aggression, limited opportunities, the necessity of wresting a living from the capricious, voracious sea, a fickle climate, and last but not least, periodic volcanic eruptions have conspired to destroy the nation's will to live. That such was not the outcome is a glowing tribute to the character of the

depth of several inches, have rendered impossible for a considerable time the habitability of many others beyond the flow of the lava. The eruption of 1845 was apparently one of the causes of the unrest that culminated in the great migration of people to America.

Full reports have not as yet reached us regarding the extent of the damage and destruction caused by this latest activity of Hekla, but although several farms have been abandoned—it is to be hoped temporarily—and the slaughter of a considerable number of sheep may

be necessary, indications are that damage has not as yet been extensive. Friends of Guðbjörg at Múlakoti, who has made this historic farmstead one of the show places of the country, are hoping that her beautiful garden, the hobby of a life-time, has not been destroyed.

Pálmi Hannesson, who flew over the erupting volcano along with geologists, photographers and reporters, writes the following account of this spectacular phenomenon:

"Weather conditions were ideal, when against the eastern sky towered the pillar of smoke to a height of possibly 10,000 metres. We were greatly affected, since we realized that we were witnessing an event that might not occur again in our lifetime. The mighty power of the volcano had been released from its fetters, and no one knew what the effect on the nation would be, and what fate was in store for the farmers in the immediate vicinity of the mountain.

As we drew nearer, the photographers made the necessary preparations. The report circulated throughout the plane that Örn Johnson, who had made the trip previously, had warned the pilot not to approach within 10 miles of Hekla, because of the shower of boulders from the crater. A strange, weird haze hung over all Árnessýsla.

The immense pillar drew nearer and nearer, and it was a breath-taking spec-

tacle to behold its ever-changing aspect and coloration. It put one in mind of the spectacular atomic display over Bikini, so ominous in its magnificence.

The lava could be seen flowing down the north-eastern slopes of the mountain. It was like a reddish-brown blanket, spreading itself over the volcano, and each time we flew over, it could be seen that it had crept a little farther down into the valleys. Over the barren wastes to the north hovered the vast shadow of the huge pillar of smoke, and now and then we could glimpse fearsome, gaping cracks in the edge of the crater, so that one had the feeling that the interior was a blazing inferno. Showers of boulders from the crater could be seen periodically in the foreground of the brownish smoke-cloud. Once we heard a crash against the plane, caused, we think, by the impact of a boulder.

One who has beheld a scene as magnificent as the one we had witnessed inevitably seeks for something with which to compare it, but seeks in vain. Here nature is at work, and man's puny efforts are insignificant in comparison."

"Blood is thicker than water." We, of Icelandic extraction, even if we have never seen the land of our forebears, sincerely hope that this unforeseen cataclysm may not affect too adversely the welfare of our kinfolk across the sea.

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OUR WAR EFFORT



Pte. Stefan P. Stephensen



Sigm. Franklin H. Stephensen

PTE. STEFAN P. STEPHENSEN—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 9, 1906. Enlisted in C.F.C. April 1940. Embarked overseas in Aug. 1940. Stationed for the most part in Scotland, as medical sergeant. Returned 1945.

SIGMN. FRANKLIN H. STEPHENSEN—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Jan. 15, 1912. Enlisted in R.C.C.S. Oct. 1940. Went overseas 1941. Went to France on D-Day. Ross Munro, war correspondent, reported: "Four hard-working and ingenious members of the R.C.C.S. began operating the first wireless sets for sending press copy to England two days after the landing and have been sending it day and night since." One of these mentioned was L.Cpl. Franklin Stephensen, of Winnipeg. Also served in Belgium and Holland. Was invalided from there Jan. 1945. Returned May 1945, and was discharged.

SONS OF MRS. AND THE LATE DR. OLAFUR STEPHENSEN, WINNIPEG, MAN.

P.O. WILLARD VERNON JOEL, D.F.C.

★

Born at Winnipeg, Man., July 14, 1924. Joined the R.C.A.F. Aug. 5, 1942. Trained at Macdonald, Man. Graduated as Sgt. Air-Gunner Dec. 18, 1942. Went overseas Jan. 1943. Made 45 operational flights over enemy territory. Was shot down May 24, 1944. He was prisoner of war 11½ months. Returned to Canada. Awarded the D.F.C. Dec. 21, 1945 for "great gallantry, high skill, fortitude and devotion to duty."

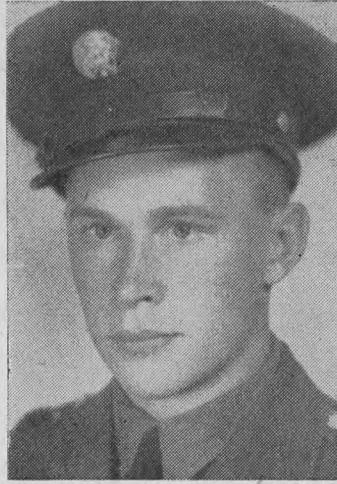
Son og Mrs. Anna and the late Mr. Joel, Vancouver, B. C., formerly of Winnipeg, Man.



P.O. W. V. Joel, D.F.C.



Cpl. Einar G. Einarson



2nd Lieut. Harold M. Einarson

CPL. EINAR GUÐMUNDUR EINARSON—Born at Mountain, N. D., Nov. 21, 1922. Joined the service June 21, 1944. Took his basic training at Buckley Field, Cal. Was at radio mechanics school at Truax Field, Wis. Served in the Marianas and Philippine Is. He received the American and Pacific Theatre ribbons.

2ND LIEUT. HAROLD METHUSALEM EINARSON—Born in Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 16, 1921. Enlisted Sept. 24, 1942. Took his basic training at Gulpport, Miss., Dearborn, Mich., and Ellington Field, Texas. While at the bombardier school at San Angelo, Texas, he was assigned to 391st Bomb group, 9th Air Force. Served in England, France, Holland and Belgium. He received the following ribbons and citations: Presidential citation (twice), Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Good Conduct Medal, American and European Theatre of operations.

SONS OF JOHANN M. & THE LATE MRS. KRISTINE EINARSON, MOUNTAIN, N. D.



Flt.-Lieut. E. Thorson, D.F.C.

FLT. LIEUT. EMIL THORSON, D.F.C.

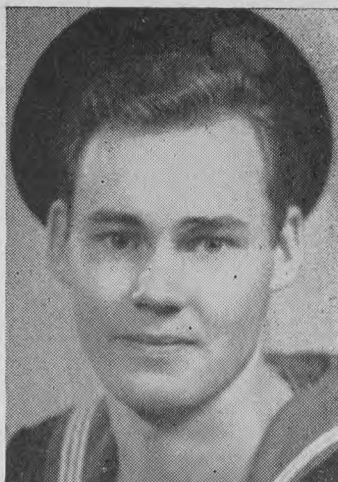
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Born at Vancouver, B. C., March 15, 1921. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Jan. 1941. He graduated as Pilot Officer at Regina, Sask., Nov. 1941. Was instructor at St. Johns, P.Q., until he embarked overseas Oct. 1943. He made 21 successful operations over enemy territory. Promoted to Flt.-Lieut. and awarded the D. F. C. The citation reads in part: "This officer has completed many successful operations against the enemy in which he has displayed high skill, fortitude and devotion to duty."

Son of H. Julius and Emily (Anderson) Thorson, Vancouver, B. C., formerly Winnipeg, Man.



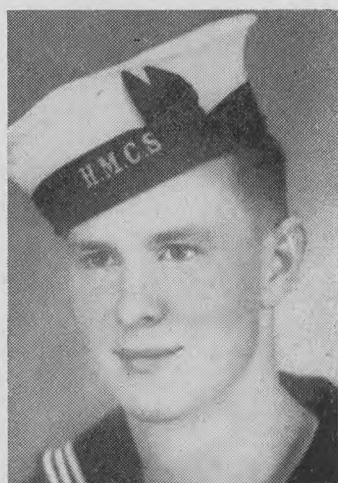
PTE. THORARIN HJORLEIFSON—Born at Riverton, Man., Feb. 24, 1916. Enlisted in P.P.C.L.I. Sept. 1942. Embarked overseas Feb. 1943. Served in Sicily, Italy and Continental Europe. Returned Jan. 1946. Son of Mrs. Gudrun and the late Björn Hjörleifson, Riverton.



A.S. SKULI STEFAN HALLDORSON—Born at Elfros, Sask., Feb. 27, 1926. Joined R.C.N.V.R. July 12, 1944. Was aboard H.M.C.S. Unicorn, Discovery, Cornwallis, Naden and Moncton. Discharged Nov. 10, 1945. Son of Carl & Ina Halldorson, Elfros, Sask.



CFN. CLIFFORD WESLEY CASSELMAN—Born at Lundar, Man., Oct. 28, 1912. Joined the R.C.O.C. Apr. 13, 1943 as orderly room clerk. Took basic training at Barriefield, Ont. Embarked for overseas July 15, 1944. Served with R.C.E.M.E. until his return Oct. 10, 1945. Discharged Feb. 15, 1946. Son of Mrs. Mary (Halldorson) Casselman and the late Russell Casselman, Winnipeg, Man.



HALLDOR G. HALLDORSON—Born at Arborg, Man., Dec. 23, 1923. Enlisted in R.C.N.V.R. Dec. 14, 1942. Trained at Halifax, N. S., and St. Hyacinthe, P.Q. Drafted to H.M.C.S. Ville de Quebec. Saw service in Bermuda, Milford, Haven, South Wales. Was on convoy duty in the English Channel, North Atlantic and France. Discharged Oct. 1945. Son of Mr. Nick and Mrs. Sveinbjörg (Ein- arson) Halldorson, Arborg, Man.



Sgt. Alexander H. Gillies



Lieut. Frances Gillies

SGT. ALEXANDER H. GILLIES—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 25, 1923. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Sept. 1943. Trained at Saskatoon, Mont Joli and Mount Pleasant.

LIEUT. FRANCES GILLIES, U.S.A.N.C.—Born at Winnipegosis, Man., Jan. 27, 1919. Enlisted in U. S. Army Aug. 1, 1945. Trained at Fort Devens, Mass., Walter Reed General Hospital, Washington, D.C. Embarked overseas Feb. 1946. At present she is with the 98th General Hospital, Munich, Germany.

DAUGHTER AND SON OF GUÐMUNDUR H. AND SARA (THORARINSON) GILLIES, WINNIPEG, MAN.



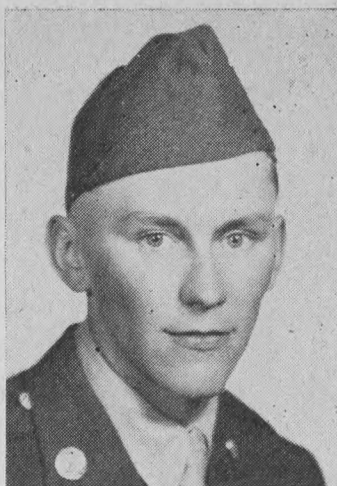
PTE. JOHANN A. S. ARASON (Eddie)—Born at Gimli, Man., Feb. 26, 1926. Enlisted in Canadian Army Dec. 21, 1944. Trained at Camp Shilo, Fort Garry, Man., and Victoria, B. C. Discharged April 11, 1946. Son of Johann G. and Jona Arason, Gimli, Man.



A.S. ALEXANDER OWEN THORARINSON—Born at Winnipegosis, Dec. 8, 1926. Joined R.C.N.V.R. July 17, 1944. Served on east coast of Canada as submarine detector. Discharged March 14, 1946. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Thorarinson, Winnipegosis, Man.



R.M.1/c Theodore Kristjan Geir



Pfc. Clarence Geir

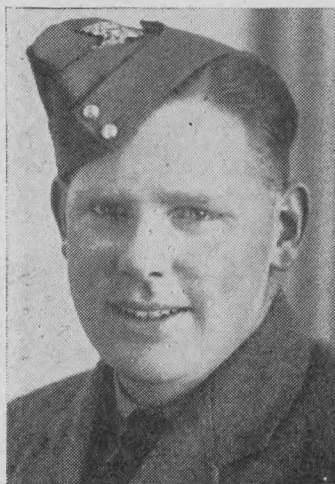
R.M. 1/c THEODORE KRISTJAN GEIR—Born at Edinburg, N. D., March 24, 1919. Enlisted in U. S. Army May 12, 1941. Embarked on ammunition ship bound for Russia. The ship was sunk July 4, 1942 off the coast of Norway. He was captured and taken to Germany where he was a prisoner of war until he was liberated April 25, 1945. Discharged October 1945.

PFC. CLARENCE GEIR—Born at Edinburg, N. D., April 27, 1925. Entered the service Mar. 19, 1945. Embarked overseas Sept. 1945 for Luzon. Discharged Nov. 25, 1946.

SONS OF KRISTJAN AND SOLVEIG (HALLDORSON) GEIR, EDINBURG, N. D.



L/C. HAROLD T. MAGNUSSON—Born in Winnipeg, Man., March 27, 1906. Enlisted with Winnipeg Grenadiers Sept. 22, 1939. Served in Jamaica, B.W.I. for 9 months. Transferred to R.C.O.C. and later to R.C.E.M.E. Was at Camp Shilo & Winnipeg. Son of Mrs. Vala and the late Mr. Magnusson, Winnipeg, Man.



GNR. GUÐMUNDUR ELINOR HELGASON—Born at Gimli, Man., April 14, 1917. Joined R.C.A. April 1942. Was stationed at Vancouver, B.C. Embarked overseas May 1, 1945. Was in England until his return Jan. 27, 1946. Discharged March 20, 1946. Son of Mrs. Hólmfríður Helgason, Gimli, Man.

**Cfn. Stefan Arnason****L.A.C. J. H. Arnason****F.O. Arni Arnason**

CFN. STEFAN ARNASON—Born Nov. 7, 1918. Enlisted in R.C.E. April 1942. Served in Canada, England and Holland. Discharged Dec. 1945.

L.A.C. JOHN HERBERT ARNASON—Born Aug. 17, 1925. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. May, 1944. Discharged Nov. 1944. Re-enlisted in Canadian Infantry Corps March 1945. Discharged Sept. 1945. Served in Canada.

F.O. ARNI ARNASON—Born June 4, 1912. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Sept. 1941. Served in Canada, England and North Africa. Discharged 1945.

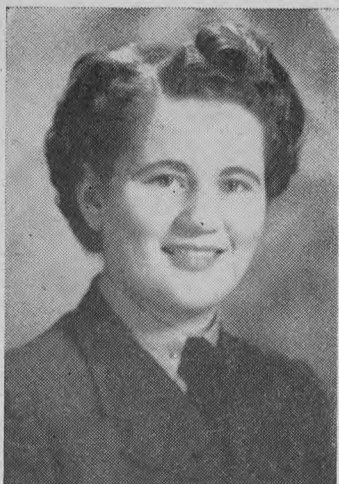
SONS OF JÓN AND ÓLÖF ARNASON, ST. JAMES, MAN.



JOHN LEONARD MYRDAL (Jack)—Born at Point Roberts, Wash., Mch 26, 1916. Joined the army transport service May 5, 1942. Served as chief engineer in the Aleutian Is. and Alaska for 3½ years. Son of S. J. and Anna (Sweinsson) Myrdal, Point Roberts, Wash.



F.O. LEONARD SKULI GUÐLAUGSON—Born at Clairmont, Alta., Sept. 28, 1912. Joined R.C.A.F. June 14, 1942. Served in Canada and European theatre of war with navigator bomber command. Discharged Feb. 28, 1944. Son of Mr. & Mrs. M. G. Gaudlaugson, Clairmont, Alta.



L.A.W. KATHERINE FINNISON—Born at Wynyard, Sask., Nov. 13, 1923. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. (W.D.) June 15, 1943. Served at MacDonald, Man., and Patricia Bay, B.C. Daughter of Fritz W. and Inga Finnson, Markerville, Alta.



CPL. ELLIS W. ELLISON—Born at Lundar, Man., March 26, 1918. Enlisted with the Winnipeg Grenadiers 1941. Served at Kiska and the Aleutian Islands. Discharged 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Thor K. Ellison, Gimli, Man.



GESTUR EYTHOR SIGURDSON—Born May 18, 1919. Enlisted in Army May 19, 1943. Trained at Winnipeg, Camp Shilo, and North Bay, Ont. Went overseas June 19, 1944. Wounded in France, Aug. 1944. Returned Dec. 11, 1944. Born in Geysir, Man. Son of Mr. & Mrs. F. P. Sigurdson, Geysir, Man.



TROOPER ALBERT HOLM—Born at Cypress River, Man., Oct. 22, 1918. Joined Canadian Army May 1942. Went overseas Oct. 1942. Went to France with Brigade H.Q., 2nd Armoured Brigade, June 12, 1944. Returned Dec. 10, 1946. Discharged Jan. 21, 1946. Son of Ludvig and Fanny Holm, Cypress River, Man.



1st LIEUT. HELEN UNNUR MATHIASON ZACKRISON—Born in Seattle, Wash., 1911. Enlisted in Army Nurses Corps Mar. 1943. Was stationed at Rheims, France, with 226th General Hospital. Discharged Feb. 1946. Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Gunnar Mathiason, Inglewood, Calif. Mrs. Zackrison is a grand-daughter of Iceland's Poet Laureate, Matthías Jochumsson.



LIEUT. ALMA TERGESEN — Born at Gimli, Man. Enlisted in C.W.A.C. Dec. 30, 1942. Served in Winnipeg, Man., Vermilion, Alta, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, P.Q., and Toronto, Ont. She was adjutant of the Toronto Co'y, C.W.A.C. She received the following decorations: C.V.S.M. and Canada War Medal. — Daughter of Hans Pieter and Sigríður (Pálsson) Tergesen, Gimli, Man.



PTE. HALLDOR JAKOB BENJAMINSON —Born at Winnipeg, Man., March 3, 1910. Enlisted with Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in March 1943. Trained at Winnipeg and Camp Shilo, Man. Served in England and France. Returned March 1946. Son of Tómas and Sofia Benjaminson, Lundar, Man.



PTE. PETER A. OLSON—Born at Gimli, Man., Nov. 7, 1918. Enlisted in RCASC Jan. 1942. Trained at Portage Le Prairie, Man., and Red Deer, Alta. Embarked overseas July 1942. Was wounded in Sicily. Returned home June 5, 1945. Discharged July, 1945. Son of Mrs. Olavia and the late Fred Olson, Gimli.



PVT. ODDGEIR BARNESON—Born in Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 21, 1917. Entered the service April 1, 1942. Trained at Presidio of San Francisco and Camp Kilmer, N. J. Embarked overseas Aug. 1942. Trained in Northern Ireland and England. Served with 19th Engineer Regt. in North Africa and Sicily invasions. Accidentally injured Aug. 15, 1943. Returned to U.S.A. Sept. 1943. Discharged Oct. 1944. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Skuli G. Barneson, Los Angeles, Calif.



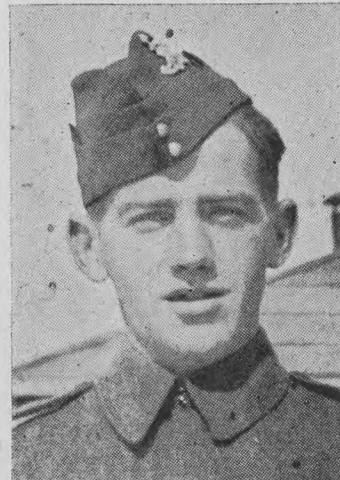
S.A. Lorne Douglas Eyolfson—Born at Winnipeg, Man., May 18, 1926. Joined the R.C.N.V.R. Mar. 20, 1944. Took his training aboard H.M.C.S. Chippawa, Cornwallis, Perigrine & Niobe. Aboard H.M.C.S. Saskatchewan he saw service in Iceland, England and Scotland. Discharged Nov. 10, 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar F. Eyolfson, Lundar, Man.



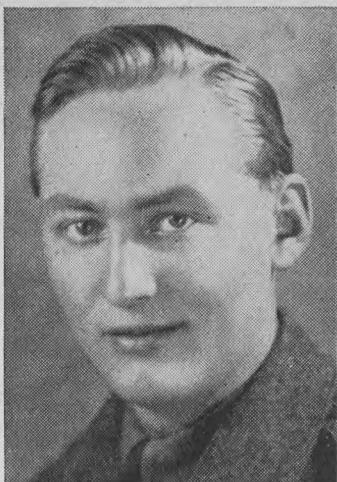
LIEUT. KENNETH HALLSON—Born at Winnipeg, Man., July 28, 1923. Enlisted in R.C.S. May 1945. Trained at Kingston, Ont. and Vernon, B. C. Discharged May 1946. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hallson, Winnipeg, Man.



We regret to announce that **HERBERT JOHNSON**, whose photograph appeared in the Sept. issue 1943, was killed in action May 23, 1944. He was the son of Mr. & Mrs. J. B. Johnson, Lundar, Man.



GNR. SIGMAR O. V. JOHNSON—Born at Gimli, Man., Feb. 18, 1917. Enlisted in R.C.A. Dec. 29, 1940. Embarked overseas Apr. 6, '41. Served in England, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Valdimar Johnson, Gimli, Man. Photograph of his brother, F.O. K. G. Johnson (Freeman) appeared in the Autumn issue 1946.



Jonas Haldor Danielson



Walter Johnathan Danielson

JONAS HALDOR DANIELSON—Born at Bowsman River, Man., July 12, 1922. Enlisted in Canadian Army Aug. 9, 1941. Trained at Vancouver, B. C., and Debert, N. S. Served in Italy, France, Holland and Germany.

WALTER JOHNATHAN DANIELSON—Born at Bowsman River, Man., Mar. 17, 1921. Enlisted in Canadian Army Aug. 9, 1941. Trained at Vancouver, B. C., and Debert, N. S. Served in England, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Discharged Jan. 25, 1946.

SONS OF HALDOR AND GLADYS (WAITE) DANIELSON, BOWSMAN, RIVER, MAN.



SGT. F. K. KRISTJANSON—Born in Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 3, 1922. Enlisted in Canadian Army Apr. 1943, and trained at Shilo, Man., and Chilliwack, B. C. Transferred to R.C.A.F. Jan. '44. Trained at Edmonton, Rivers, Regina and Winnipeg. Discharged Apr. 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. J. F. Kristjanson, Winnipeg.



LIEUT. EDWARD BJORN CARLSTROM—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Apr. 30, 1921. Enlisted in R.C.N.V.R. spring of 1943. Served 2½ years, part of which time was overseas. Discharged Oct. 1945. — Son of August and Guðrún (Bjornson) Carlstrom, Vancouver, B. C., formerly of Winnipeg, Man.

Gold Medalists and Scholarship Winners

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING



Hans Raymond Beck (University Gold Medal). Son of Mr. & Mrs. J. T. Beck, Winnipeg.

BACHELOR OF LAWS



Aðalsteinn Kristjanson (The Hon. Al-

exander Morris Exhibition in Law \$50). Son of Mr. & Mrs. Friðrik Kristjanson of Winnipeg.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE



Frederick Carl Kristjanson (University Gold Medal). Son of Mr. & Mrs. Jakob Kristjanson, Winnipeg.

Harold A. C. Johnson, who graduated from the University of Manitoba, 1946, has recently been awarded a bursary of \$450.00 by the National Research Council. Since graduation Harold has been doing research in economic geology. He is the son of Prof. & Mrs. Skuli Johnson of Winnipeg.

★

Nine year old Dorothy Vernon has won for the third time, first honors as soloist in the Kiwanis Club Music Festival in Toronto, Ont. She is the daughter of Rosa Hermanson-Vernon and Mr. Vernon of Toronto.

★

We will have further news of graduates in the Autumn issue.

B.Sc. HOME ECONOMICS

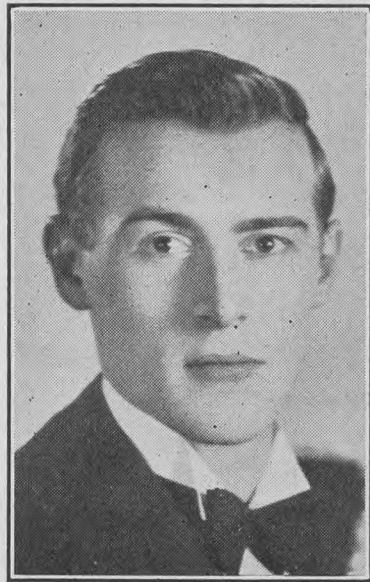
Kristín Cecelia Anderson (University Gold Medal). Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. E. A. Anderson, Baldur, Man.



Asgeir Jonas Thorsteinson, was born in Winnipeg, where he took his public and secondary schooling. He also attended the J. B. Academy; taught for one

year, graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1941. In 1942 Jonas enlisted in the army, spent 6 month in Officers' Training school, 3 months in Three Rivers, Quebec and the rest of the time in Calgary. Went overseas in 1943. He was unable to go on active service as his vision was faulty. In 1944 through the British Council he attended the Imperial College of Science of London. In 1946 he received his Doctor of Philosophy degree, also named a Fellow of the Entomological Society of London. Dr. Thorsteinson has accepted a position with the Forest Insect Laboratory in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. Dr. Thorsteinson is the son of Mrs. Halldora Thorsteinson, and the late Sigurdur Thorsteinson of Winnipeg. His wife was formerly Mildred Anderson of Winnipeg.

★



Patrick Gordon Olafson has been awarded a \$450.00 bursary by the National Research Council for post graduate work at McGill university. Patrick received his public and secondary schooling in Winnipeg and Aberdeen, Scotland. During the war he worked as a steel chemist at Vulcan Iron Works, Winnipeg, where his father is chief metallur-

gist. Patrick has his degree in B.Sc. from McGill. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Jon Olafson of Winnipeg.

★

IN THE THEOLOGICAL FIELD



Ernest Peter Johnston, graduated in Theology from the United College with first class honors in April this year. He will be ordained at the Manitoba Conference of the United Church of Canada, which meets in Winnipeg in June. — Ernest is the son of Mrs. Helga Johnston and the late Paul Johnston of Winnipeg.

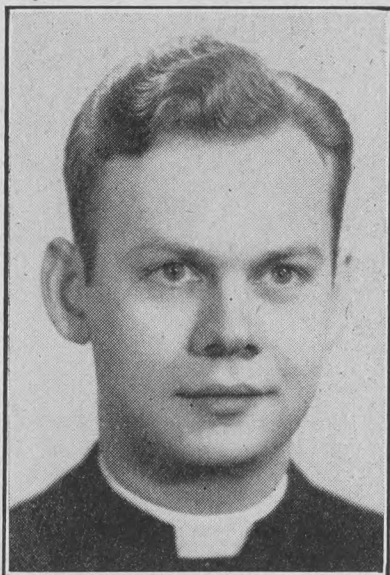
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Harold Steingrímur Sigmar, born at Selkirk, Man., educated at the University of North Dakota and at Mount Airy

Seminary, Philadelphia, where he received his B.D. degree, and the same year an M.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania. On ordination in 1940 he became pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church in Seattle, Wash.

★



Eric Halfdan Sigmar, born in Wynyard, Sask. Educated at University of North Dakota and graduated from Gettysburg College with honors in 1944. Graduated from Philadelphia Seminary in May this year. Will be ordained at Mountain, N. D., in June. Eric has accepted a parish in the Argyle district.

They are sons of the Rev. Dr. & Mrs. H. Sigmar of Vancouver, B. C.

News of Interest Far and Near

Mr. I. C. Ingimundson has been appointed Vice President and General Manager of the Welland Electric Corporation in Welland, Ont. Mr. Ingimundson was born in Selkirk, Man., graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1937. He is the son of Mrs. Jonina Ingimundson and the late Sigurdur Ingimundson of Winnipeg.

News of Interest Far and Near

Mr. H. Steinthorson has recently been appointed manager of the North American Lumber Co. Mr. Steinthorson came to Canada from North Dakota in 1905. He had a store in Wadena, Sask., for some time and in 1916 came to Winnipeg, where he has since been employed by the North American Lumber Co.

★

The president of the Icelandic Canadian Club, Carl Hallson, was recently invited to address a gathering of Tribune Carriers, who are leading contestants in the current trip to Vancouver contest. He was well able to give the boys good advice and pointers, as he was a winner in a contest of this type in 1927. He further expressed his gratitude for training and experience gained while he worked as a carrier boy with the Tribune. Carl is now employed by the Great-West Life Assurance Co., where he has been awarded membership in the quarter million section of the presidents club.

★



Rev. V. J. Eylands was granted a year's leave of absence by the First Lutheran

church, Winnipeg, to go to Iceland, where he will take over the congregation of Útskálum and in exchange the Rev. Eirik Brynjólfsson, will come here and serve the First Lutheran church. Rev. Eylands, together with his family, expects to leave in July or as soon as passage is available.

★

Miss Sigrun Johnson was elected president of the Amiens club at their annual meeting recently. She is the daughter of Mrs. Sigrun Johnson and the late Arngrimur Johnson of Winnipeg.

★

Borsteinn P. Þorsteinsson of Winnipeg has been honored by the Icelandic Government. They conferred a \$1,000.00 author's subsidy on him. He has written a number of books, his latest being "Saga Íslendinga í Vesturheimi" in 3 volumes.

★

NEW U.S.—ICELAND AIR ROUTE OPENED

The first direct scheduled air service between Canada, U.S. and Iceland was inaugurated by American Overseas Airlines March 17.

The inaugural flights originated in Washington, where Mrs. Thor Thors, wife of the Icelandic Minister to the United States, christened the flagship Reykjavik, during appropriate christening ceremonies at National airport prior to its departure for Iceland.

Among the Icelandic passengers on board, were the Icelandic minister, Thor Thors and Mrs. Thors, Dr. Helgi Briem, Icelandic consul, New York; Dr. Arni Helgason, Icelandic consul, Chicago and G. L. Johannson, Icelandic consul, Winnipeg.

★

At the Manitoba Music Festival held in Winnipeg last April, Erlingur Eggertson won in his class (Bass solo, Grade B). Son of Mrs. Thorey Eggertson and the late Arni Eggertson of Winnipeg.

Roy M. Aikenhead, formerly of Winnipeg has been appointed secretary of the Saskatchewan Music Festival Assn. of Saskatoon. Prior to moving to Saskatoon in 1941, Roy took active part in the Manitoba Music Festival and choir work in Winnipeg. He is the manager of the Kinsmen Celebrity Concert Series in Saskatoon. He is the son of Neil Aikenhead of Winnipeg and his wife Christine (Sgurdson), formerly of Arborg, Man.

★

Icelandic Canadian Evening School

The closing concert of the Icelandic Evening School was given in the Good Templar's hall, Monday evening, May 19.

Guttormur J. Guttormson of Riverton, Man., gave an address on "The Icelandic Pioneers of New Iceland"; a little girl, Unnur Ann Kristjanson recited Icelandic poetry, and Mrs. Elma Gislason gave two groups of vocal solos, featuring the composition of Mrs. Louise Ottenson Gudmunds, who has twice won first prize for her compositions in contests sponsored by the Composers' Society of California. Mrs. Gudmunds accompanied the singer.

Rev. V. J. Eylands thanked the speaker and paid tribute to the work of the Icelandic Canadian Club in the sphere of Adult Education.

Mrs. H. F. Danielson, director of the school presided and gave a report on the work of the school. During the last three years, she said, thirty lectures have been given on the history and literature of Iceland and on the Icelandic pioneers in Manitoba. This season the language classes were conducted at the Daniel McIntyre collegiate. The teachers were Miss Lilja Guttormson, W. Kristjanson and Mrs. Danielson. The Icelandic language lessons prepared for the school and the lectures that have been published (in the book, *Iceland's Thousand Years*, and the *Icel. Can. Magazine*) have been sent on request to people in various parts of this continent as well as to Sweden and Australia. Mrs. Danielson told of a letter received recently from Dr. Emirto de Lima, Colombia, South America, who has held many high offices in

the diplomatic service of his country and is an eminent scholar. He expresses his appreciation of the book, *Iceland's Thousand Years*, and also sends a clipping from a Spanish language paper "El Heraldo", published in Barranquilla, Columbia, that contains Dr. de Lima's review on the book, and an article about Iceland.

Diamond Weddings

On March 16 last there gathered at the home of Mr. & Mrs. C. P. Paulson at Gimli, about 60 relatives and friends to observe their 60th wedding anniversary.

The festival commenced with a short devotion conducted by the local pastor, Rev. Skuli Sigurgeirson. The Rev. R. Marteinson of Winnipeg, spoke reminiscently and with appreciation of their work and loyal support in the church at Gimli during his pastorate, which covered the first decade of this century.

Numerous telegrams and messages of congratulations were received from friends at nearby and distant places. Among these was a telegram from His Majesty King George VI and another from Hon. R. F. McWilliams, Lieut. Gov. of Manitoba.

Among those present were Mrs. Violet Ingaldson their daughter, and her children, and their son Gordon, a Winnipeg lawyer, and his wife Magnea.

The Paulsons have been excellent community workers. For decades Mrs. Paulson has faithfully worked in the Sunday school and the ladies aid, where she is a charter member. Mr. Paulson has long since been recognized as a citizen of ability and leadership.

★

On Jan. 25th last, between 40 and 50 friends and relatives gathered at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Eyjólfur Sveinsson, 586 Victor St., Winnipeg, the occasion was to honor them on their 60th wedding anniversary. They came to Canada shortly after the turn of the century, and

were among the early settlers around Oak View, Man., where they farmed for over 20 years, later moved to Winnipeg.

★

The first 61 year wedding celebration to be held in the Wynyard district, took place on Dec. 15, 1946, in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Asgeir Guðjónsson. There were gathered on this memorable occasion, their children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and friends. They were among the pioneers who settled in the Wynyard district in 1905. They have always taken an active part in community life and their hospitality is renowned. This venerable couple have lived a happy and useful life. Asgeir is now 93 and Sigríður is 89.

★

Icelandic heiress

A \$240,000 fortune has fallen into the lap of an Icelandic woman living in Winnipeg. Like a fairy-tale ending to a story of trustworthy toil is this sudden turn of good fortune that recently came to Miss Margret Laxdal, who came from Iceland in 1886 with her parents, Sigurður Sigurðsson and his wife Maria Guðmundsdóttir. She was born at Krossastaðir in Þingeyjarsýsla in 1878. Nineteen years of age, she came from Gardar, North Dakota, where her parents had settled, to look for a job in Winnipeg.

She became a waitress at the colorful old Mariaggi Hotel, which was bought in 1905 by Thomas B. Campbell, an eye-drop salesman.

Campbell was away a great deal of the time on selling trips and very soon Margret Laxdal was acting as overseer of the hotel. She is remembered by patrons as "a comely, efficient woman, utterly indispensable to the hotel management."

Campbell sold the hotel in 1913, and shortly after that Miss Laxdal took a position in the grill room of a large Winnipeg department store, where she worked for 27 years, later becoming a caterer for private parties.

When Campbell died last summer in Minneapolis, he left his entire estate to "My true friend, Maggie Laxdal." To the recipient the news came as a great surprise. She had seen Campbell only a few times since 1913.

When interviewed, Miss Laxdal said: "I had no idea Campbell had so much money. My means have always been meagre; I shall not spend the money foolishly."

Now, after 54 years as a waitress, Margret Laxdal looks forward to having a home of her own for the first time. She would also like to take a trip to Iceland and perhaps to other countries as well.

NURSES GRADUATE

WINNIPEG GENERAL HOSPITAL:

Olive Kristin Oddleifsson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. G. Oddleifsson, Arborg, Manitoba;

Jóna Thorkelsson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Thorkelsson, Arnes, Man.;

Louise Christine Jonasson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Jonasson, Winnipeg, Manitoba;

MISERCORDIA HOSPITAL:

Stefanía Lifman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Lifman, Arborg, Manitoba.

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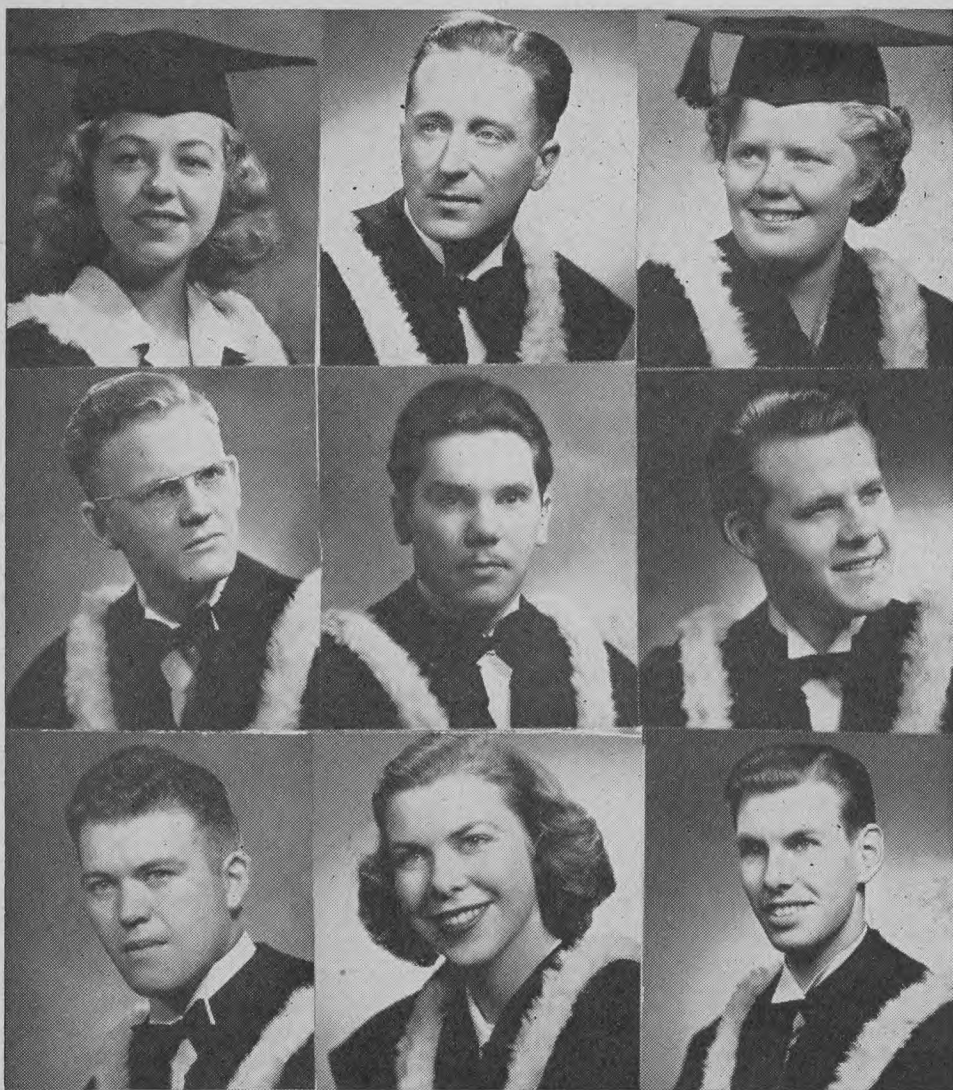
At the annual meeting of the Provincial Chapter, I. O. D. E. Mrs. B. S. Benson was elected to the Council, to hold office as Provincial Empire Study convener; and Mrs. J. B. Skaptason was re-elected to the office of Ex-service Personnel convener.

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GRADUATES



Top row, l. to r.: Pauline M. Einarson, Guðm. E Björnson, Jean Thorun Law.
 Middle row: Lorne Palmason, Paul H. A. Westdal, Stanley H. Baldwin.
 Bottom row: Leifur Th. Oddson, Carol Joy Palmason, Kenneth H. Einarson.

BACHELORS OF ART

W. H Baldwin, son of Mr. & Mrs. H. Baldwin, Winnipeg.

Guðm. E. Björnson, son of Mr. & Mrs. Björn B. Björnson, Lundar, Man.

Pauline M. Einarson, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Christian Einarson, Winnipeg.

Jean Thorun Law, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Claude Law (Mrs. Law is the former Thorun Sigurjonson of Lundar) of Winnipeg.

Jonas H. V. Rafnkelson, son of Mr. & Mrs. B. Rafnkelson, formerly of Lundar, now of Winnipeg.

BACHELORS OF SCIENCE

John Herbert Arnason, son of Mr. & Mrs. Jon Arnason of Winnipeg.

Lorne Palmason, son of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Palmason, Winnipeg.

Stanley Horace Baldwin, son of Mr. & Mrs. W. Baldwin, Winnipeg.

Paul H. A. Westdal, son of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Westdal, Winnipeg.

HOME ECONOMICS

Carol Joy Palmason, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. H. J. Palmason, Winnipeg.

Carol Joyce Sigurdson, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Sigurdson, Winnipeg.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

Leifur Th. Oddson, son of Mrs. Asta Oddson and the late Leifur Oddson, Winnipeg.

Kenneth Henry Einarson, son of Mr. & Mrs. Henry Einarson, Winnipeg.

DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL WORK

Audrey Fridfinnson, daughter of Mrs. Wm. Fridfinnson and the late Wm. Fridfinnson, Winnipeg.

DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION

Audrey Aðalbjörg Amundson, daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. August Amundson, Selkirk, Man.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES

Margaret Guðrun Breckman, daughter of Mrs. G. Breckman and the late G. Breckman, Winnipeg, formerly of Lundar, Man.

Laura Guðlaug Einarson, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Thorsteinn Einarson, Winnipeg.

DIPLOMA IN MUSIC

Thora Solveig Asgeirson, winner of Wednesday Morning Musical Scholarship, \$25.00. Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jon Asgeirson, Winnipeg.



Left to right: Laura G. Einarson, Margaret G. Breckman, Carol Joyce Sigurdson.

University of Saskatchewan 1947....Graduates

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Lorne Douglas Indridason, Oxbow, Sask.

Hjörtur Björn Jónas Leo, Saskatoon, Sask.

B.Sc. IN AGRICULTURE

Conrad Gislason, Leslie, Sask.

Jónas Kristjanson, Wynyard, Sask.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND HONOURS

Conrad Gislason — Distinction at graduation and won the Province of Saskatchewan Dept. of Co-operation and Co-operative Development Prize.

Barbara Rose Olafson, Unity, Sask., won a Third Year Scholarship in Household Science.

Howard W. Baldwin, Saskatoon, won a 1st Year Scholarship in Arts and Science.

Historical Sketch of the Icelandic Settlement of Argyle

(Continued from page 8)

among many others. It might be mentioned in this connection that at the turn of the century William G. Simons, the late brother of Mrs. J. B. Skaptason, one of the many outstanding women the district has produced, was one of the largest owners of threshing machines in Manitoba. At one time he owned three of the largest type steam threshing outfits. It can thus be seen that the Icelanders in Argyle were not long in mastering an unfamiliar occupation.

Indeed it is both refreshing and inspiring to read the histories of many of the pioneers who came to the district with no worldly goods but only industry and ambition, and who then proceeded to work the soil so successfully that many of them died rich men, relatively speaking. Many examples of such industry might be cited from the early years but I must content myself with mentioning one who is typical of many. This is Björn Sigvaldason Walterson, who, with some 400 others, came to Canada from Iceland in 1874, bringing with him his wife and child. He and many others spent the first winter in Kinmount, Ontario, where he lost his child, all the children between one and two years of age dying. Such was the reception the promised land gave these immigrants. A heart-breaking attempt to settle in Nova Scotia followed. This was abandoned after some six years and Björn came to Winnipeg with one dollar in his pocket to show for seven years' labour in the New World. In 1882 he took land in Argyle but had to spend part of the next two years in Winnipeg in order to be able to maintain his family. In 1883 he sowed grain in four acres, reaping 23 bushels to the acre. The next year he added ten acres and was able to sell a wagon load of wheat. Fifteen acres were added the following

year. Björn then borrowed some money against his land, acquired horses, and fortune began to smile on him, although he still met some reverses now and again. When he retired in 1907 he was the owner of 720 acres of land and a highly respected member of a community in whose life he had played an important part. His story is typical as I said of many. It is interesting to observe in his case and in so many others that the men who were most successful were those whose interests were widest, who were always prepared in every way to support every undertaking in the community.

Life in the settlement in the very early years must at times have been lonely, although Argyle was probably in this respect as in so many others not as badly off as many other settlements. The coming of the railway to Glenboro in 1886 and to Baldur in 1889 brought town life to the district. Then, too, religious activities were organised early. In 1884 a Lutheran congregation was formed at a meeting of the Argyle settlers held at the home of Björn Walterson. This congregation was known as Fríkirkjusöfnuðir (Brú). In the next year, however, it split into two parts, the new one being the congregation known as Frelsissöfnuður (Grund). This split left no bitter feelings but was a natural one, the two congregations being composed of the inhabitants of the eastern and western parts of the district. The two joined hands in 1889 in building a church (up to that time services were held in private homes and schoolhouses). This is the church which is still standing at Grund—the mother church of the community. In the eastern part of the district the Brú church was not built until 1910.

Prior to 1890 there was no resident pastor in the community. Rev. Jón

Bjarnason visited the parish now and again. In 1890, however, the congregations asquired the services of a permanent parson in the person of Rev. Hafsteinn Pétursson who remained there until 1893. Again the congregations were without a minister until 1896 when the Rev. Jón J. Clemens accepted a call thither, remaining there until 1901. In 1903 the Rev. Friðrik Hallgrímsson came and stayed until 1924. He was extremely popular and left a great impression on the religious life of the community. The Rev. K. K. Ólafsson, for years president of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, served the parishes from 1925 to 1930 and was succeeded by Rev. Egill H. Fálnis, who left to serve Mountain, N.D., in 1945, since which time the community has been without its own minister. Rev. R. Marteinson and others have, however, visited the district several times.

There are now four congregations in the settlement, Baldur (Immanuelssöfnuður) having been organised in 1907 and Glenboro in 1919. They all own respectable church edifices and together combined to erect a model parsonage in Glenboro in 1925.

On the whole it may be said that church activities have played a vital role in the life of the community. They have given it an awareness of itself and a unity which would probably otherwise be lacking. It is to be hoped that the community may not be without the services of a minister of their own for long as disintegration might set in. An interesting aspect of religious activity in Argyle is the fact that religious differences have been very largely absent. No bitter controversies and no disunity have marked religious affairs there. It would be interesting to investigate the reasons for this state of affairs, which is almost unique among Icelanders in America.

In connection with religious affairs it is apposite to mention a very interesting and I think rather unique organisation which arose in the early years of

the settlement. This is the society known as the Siðabótafélag (which I suppose might be freely rendered as the League for Moral Uplift). The founder of this society was really Skafti Arason. He traversed the district urging people to sign their names to a document setting forth a certain standard of conduct which the signer promised to maintain. The principal commitments were: 1. Not to curse or to take the name of God in vain. 2. To abstain from the use of intoxicating beverages. 3. Not to commence smoking after having signed the document.

Steps were then taken to organise the society and an organisational meeting was held at the home of Kristján Jónsson on March 23, 1884. Kristján was chairman of the meeting and Björn Jónsson frá Ási secretary. An executive committee was chosen consisting of Skafti Arason, president, Björn Jónsson, vice-president, and Kristján Jónsson and Jón Ólafsson (one of the prominent settlers of the Brú district). At this meeting 96 men and women were enrolled as members and a constitution adopted. For about two years the society worked with great spirit but after that time the weaknesses of the flesh, so to speak, asserted themselves and the society disintegrated. The rules of conduct seemed too severe to many. Nevertheless the movement left traces in the life of the community.

From the very start the Icelanders in Argyle took an important part in municipal affairs, and there have usually been one or more Icelanders on the council. It must be remembered that Argyle is by no means a wholly Icelandic settlement and Icelanders have thus had to compete with English speaking people. This they have done very well, taking part in all matters affecting the municipality. Of the early settlers Sigurður Christopherson, Kristján Jónsson, Árni Sveinsson, Skafti Arason, Friðbjörn S. Friðriksson served on the council and today two members of the

council are Icelanders, Björn S. Johnson and Hjalti Sveinsson.

Argyle has produced a number of distinguished sons and daughters. The Hon. Thos. H. Johnson was a native of the district. He carved out for himself, as is too well known to need emphasizing, a distinguished career at the bar and became Attorney General of Manitoba. Sigurbjörn Jóhannsson was a poet of merit and his daughter, Jakóbína Johnson, is famous for her poetry. One of the most distinguished and talented ministers of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, the late Dr. Björn B. Jónsson, was a son of the pioneer, Björn Jónsson. The present president of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, Dr. Haraldur Sigmar, is also a native son of Argyle. The Rev. Sigurður Christopherson is another. Konni Johannesson has made a name for himself in aviation. Argyle has been and is represented in the medical profession by such men as Dr. Jón Stefáns-son, Dr. Haraldur Anderson, and Dr. Julius Anderson. Dr. Robert Helgason, the present doctor in Glenboro, is a grandson of one of the early settlers, the highly respected Jónas Helgason. Joseph Skaptason and Sigurður Helgason have distinguished themselves in agricultural studies and are both teaching at agricultural colleges.

Strangely enough Argyle Icelanders have acquired a reputation for being rather uninterested (to put it mildly) in intellectual and literary pursuits, having even been called "andlegir Hornstrendingar" ("spiritually bankrupt" is probably the nearest English equivalent). It must, I think, be admitted that there is some truth in this criticism in spite of many individuals who stand out and in spite of such evidence of a liking for literature as community libraries (lestrarfélög). Very few of the Argylers have given their attention to letters or even to the turning out of extemporaneous or occasional verse which is such a pronounced avocation of Icelanders almost everywhere. They have been very

poor contributors to the Icelandic weeklies and periodicals. In this respect I think even a distinction might be drawn between the Argyle and South Cypress municipalities. The latter has, I believe, been superior in this field.

Many reasons have been advanced to account for this state of affairs. Some have thought that Argylers have been too concerned with farming and other material pursuits. The following stanza expresses this viewpoint:

Bindishnúka ber við ský,
bænda lúkur fyllast,
hveiti sjúkar sálir í
sveittum búkum tryllast.

which may be rendered:

Against the sky the grain stooks
stand,
The farmers' palms are filling,
Sick with love of wheat their souls
In sweating hulks are milling.

Others again say that this defect in Argylers is easily explained by the fact that the majority of them come from Þingeyjarsýsla, but this is vehemently denied by others, including Þingeyj-
jningar.

So far I have hardly touched on the northern part of the Argyle settlement, i.e. the extension of the settlement to the municipality of South Cypress. Argyle municipality was pretty completely settled by 1885 and newcomers had to look for land elsewhere. The town of Glenboro rose with the coming of the railway in 1886. Icelanders began to arrive there at once. With the railway came one of the outstanding Icelanders in America, Friðjón Friðriksson. He at once established a store in Glenboro and successfully carried on business for twenty years, while many stores about him failed in the difficulties of the pioneering days. Friðjón was the most prominent inhabitant of the Glenboro district as long as he remained there and took a very great part in all

the affairs of the community, winning the respect and admiration of both the Icelandic and British inhabitants of the community. For seventeen years he served on the School Board, as well as performing many other services for his fellow citizens. Nor were his activities confined to his home community. He stood in the front ranks of laymen in the Icelandic Lutheran Synod.

In 1906 Friðjón retired to Winnipeg, selling his business to Kristján and Sigurjón Sigmar, two of the well known and numerous Sigmar brothers who have played a prominent part in the life of the Argyle settlement, and to Kristján Hjálmarson. They successfully ran the business for several years, and although it passed out of the hands of Icelanders for a few years, it has now for several years been in the hands of Fred Frederickson and Otto Sigurdson. The former of these is the son of the above mentioned pioneer Friðbjörn S. Friðriksson, who himself for a time was in business in Glenboro. The present business of Frederickson & Co., is a very large concern, being one of the finest retail stores to be found in any village in the province and a great asset to the community.

It may be said that Icelanders in both municipalities of the settlement have played a very prominent part in the business life of the community. For years the late Kristján Benediktsson ran a large general store in Baldur. Kristján Jónsson and his sons were very prominent in the implement business there for many decades. In Cypress River the largest general store was long owned and run by Jónas Anderson, the son of Halldór Árnason. In Glenboro very many Icelanders have been in business and I can only mention a few. Guðmundur Lambertsen has for many years had a jewellery business there, but is better known for his poetic talents and great sense of humour. A shoe store and harness shop was in the hands of the late B. B. Myrdal for years. G. J.

Oleson has since 1912 been in the implement business there, but like Mr. Lambertsen is better known for his writings in the Icelandic weeklies and periodicals. He published the Glenboro Gazette for years and is the author of a survey of the Icelanders in South Cypress, published in the Almanak of the late Ólafur S. Thorgeirsson. Mr. Oleson is also Clerk of the County Court and local Justice of the Peace and member of the Town Board. Jón Ólafson for years had a lumber business in Glenboro.

The settlement of Icelanders in the country north of Glenboro commenced in 1889 when the father of the Icelandic settlement in South Cypress or the Skálholt settlement as it is sometimes called, Brynjólfur Jósefsson, came to the district. He settled some 11 miles north and east of Glenboro. His first house was of sod construction. For some 40 years Brynjólfur was the mainspring of all community affairs among the Icelanders in Skálholt and his home a sort of community centre. Brynjólfur was what in Icelandic is called a "heljarmenni" both as to physical and mental qualities.

In his wake many settlers came until the number of Icelandic homes in the district reached some 26. Prominent among these early settlers were the following: Jón Júlíus Árnason who settled there in 1889. He was very prominent in community life, leading the orthodox, while Brynjólfur led the heterodox, section of the community. His home was known as Skálholt and a post office was located there in 1899. Jón was endowed with considerable poetic gifts and his productions in that line were very famous and are still remembered by many. Alexander Eldjárn Jónsson took land very early and farmed there for several years before coming to Glenboro where he has been very prominent in community affairs, holding the position of Bailiff and Constable. Magnus Jónsson frá Fjalli came to the settlement in 1892 but left for the

coast after ten years. He was an outstanding Icelfander and is well known for his writings including *Vertiðarlök*. Ólafur Mikael Jónsson frá Kúðá was a prominent man in Iceland before coming to South Cypress in 1891. His son was the Tryggvi Ólafsson whose hospitality I have alluded to before. It was outstanding even among Icelanders who are renowned in this respect. Every Sunday, except in the depth of winter, his home, located some 12 miles east and north of Glenboro, was overrun by some 20-30 people, all of whom were royally entertained and regaled by him and his wife. But one could go on and on and I must call a halt to this roll call.

As with Argyle, it is probably correct to say that the pioneers of South Cypress did not have to endure as great hardships as many elsewhere. But pioneering is hard in any community and Skálholt can tell some harrowing tales. There is e.g. the case of Sigurjón Stefánsson, one of the first settlers in the district. In the first or second year after his arrival his wife and three children caught measles. The wife and two of the children died. It is recorded that Sigurjón, to give his wife burial, carried the corpse on his back all the way to the church at Argyle—a distance of 10-15 miles. This act will, I know, remind you all of Einar Jónsson's fine piece of sculpture, depicting an outlaw performing the same task. Such men are cast in the mould of their Viking forebears.

Intellectually, Skálholt showed in its early years great activity. I quote here G. J. Oleson's account of these early years:

"When the district was in the main fully settled people began to think of community activities. First of all a Lutheran congregation was formed, "Cypress-hæða söfnuður". The instigators of this movement were Jón Júlíus Árnason and Pétur Pálsson. But in religious matters men were divided and the

formation of this congregation caused considerable commotion. The leader of those opposed to its formation was Brynjólfur Jósefsson, who may be considered the founder and father of the settlement. This work, therefore, met obstacles from the start and always laboured under difficulties. This small congregation, however, took the initiative in the building of a community hall, but in this undertaking it enjoyed the assistance of many outside the congregation. During these years ministers occasionally visited the community, e.g. Rev. B. B. Jónsson, Rev. J. J. Clemens and others. They preached and performed other religious rites. No written sources survive from this period, all such having been lost.

From the ruins of the congregation rose the Menningarfélag [Cultural Society]. A meeting was held at the home of Brynjólfur Jósefsson on Nov. 5, 1896. In the account of this it is mentioned that the congregation is now no more and that men agreed to form a society to be called Menningarfélag. An executive was chosen consisting of three men, Brynjólfur Jósefsson, who was President, Jón Jónsson and Jón Júlíus Árnason. The main organisational meeting was held Dec. 13, a constitution adopted and 73 members enrolled. According to the sources, eight more joined during the winter of 1897-98. On the other hand a few resigned from the society because of hard feelings stemming from the fate of the congregation. The names of Jón Júlíus Árnason and Hjálmar Árnason together with their families were struck off the membership list. Outside the Menningarfélag stood also Magnús Jónsson frá Fjállí and Pétur Pálsson.

The constitution of the society is in twelve sections and shows what the members had in mind. . . . The community hall is openly declared to be under the management and ownership of the Menningarfélag. The eighth section of the constitution reads: "The de-

sire of the members is to foster the common welfare of all the members of the society in an educational and Christian sense." The ninth section reads: "If any member or several members of the society suffer severe losses or meet with accidents through which they come to be in need of assistance, the society as a whole desires to lend them a helping hand as far as means and circumstances permit." The tenth section declares that all members, male and female, who have reached the age of 18 years, have the right to vote and be elected to office. The society promoted debates and concerts which were an enlightening influence. The Menningarfélag did not exist long but it acted as a ferment in the mental life of the settlers and caused people to turn their attention to cultural matters.

When the society came to an end it was replaced by the "Íslenzka Lestrarfélagið í Cypress-sveit" (The Icelandic Library in the municipality of Cypress). This became the most important society in the history of the settlement. It flourished for many years and has not yet been dissolved. It promoted debates, public concerts and dramatics. In addition it bought all available Icelandic books and amassed a very fine collection. The first play to be staged was "Misiskilningurinn" (The Misunderstanding) by the poet Kristján Jónsson. This was shown for three nights before capacity audiences. The players were under the direction of the teacher, Sigurður Thorarensen, and acquitted themselves very well. There were at this time in the district many men of great talents and there was much interest in community activities. In recent years the number of Icelanders has been greatly reduced and there are now only about ten Icelandic homes there."

To this account it may be added that in the 1920's there was very great interest in dramatics among the Icelanders in Glenboro and a number of plays were staged in a very creditable manner.

Too, in the thirties a Men's Society (Karlaklúbbur) was founded in Glenboro which worked very successfully for a number of years. The club put out a written paper called "Aron," which was read at meetings of the club and well received. The club held annually a public concert at which prominent outsiders spoke.

In South Cypress, as in Argyle, Icelanders have played a prominent part in the affairs of the community as a whole. Alexander Eldjárn Jónsson sat in the council for a number of years and the present reeve of the municipality is an Icelander, Gunnar J. Ólafson. Many have served as school trustees, among them being Friðjón Friðriksson, Jón Ólafson, P. G. Magnus, Jón Sigvaldason and P. A. Anderson. On the Town Board the following have served: Jón Ólafson, Friðbjörn S. Friðriksson, Olgeir Friðriksson, Ágúst S. Arason and G. J. Oleson. The last two are on the present Board. The presidency of the Board of Trade has at times been held by Icelanders.

In this connection I think it should be mentioned that the Icelanders have made themselves an integral part of the community, which, as I said before, is by no means a wholly Icelandic one. In fact in South Cypress the Icelanders have always been a minority, forming in Glenboro about one-third of the population. Relations with their fellow citizens of different racial origin have always been very good and racial antagonism has been at a minimum. Yet the Icelanders have not lost their identity or abandoned their cultural heritage. In many ways the community of Argyle as a whole may be said to be a model of what Canadian society should be, a society in which the various racial groups bring to the common store the best they have to offer in their varied cultures. If Canada is to have a culture and soul of her own, this must come from the mingling of the varied racial and cultural traits of her peoples to

form a new and distinct thing, produced not by rejecting the contributions of all but one or two of her groups but by accepting the fact that all have much to offer. All the peoples of this country played their part in winning the war (Argyle sent very many of her sons as all who read the Icelandic Canadian will know) and all must be allowed to work together at the task of fashioning the new, united **Canadian** society.

The future of the Icelandic settlement of Argyle is bright. Its inhabitants are prosperous and satisfied with their lot. An especially good omen, I think, is the fact that more and more of its inhabitants are distinguishing themselves in scholastic pursuits. Readers of the Icelandic Canadian will not have to be reminded that great numbers, relatively speaking, of young Argyle Icelanders have distinguished themselves by winning scholarships and

entering on the paths of higher education. Both in Baldur and Glenboro has this been the case. This cannot fail to reflect a lustre on the settlement in years to come when these people take their places of leadership in our Canadian society, mindful at the same time of their Icelandic cultural heritage.

Argyle has been blessed with devoted sons and daughters. No matter how far they stray from home in the course of their vocations the settlement still remains home for them and they are never happier than when they have an opportunity of visiting their former haunts. Nor is this strange. No settlement has been better to its children than Argyle, none has offered greater opportunities. It has been a kindly, beneficent mother. The settlement today reflects great credit on the pioneers who so well laid the foundations for its future development.



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